



**CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL**  
**RHONDDA CYNON TAF**  
**COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**A virtual meeting of the CABINET will be held on  
Friday, 18th December, 2020 at 1.00 pm**

**Contact: Hannah Williams - Council Business Unit (Tel No. 01443 424062)**

**Councillors and members of the public wishing to request the facility to address the Cabinet on any of the business as listed below, must request to do so by 5pm on the Wednesday, 16 December 2020 Councillors and Members of the public should stipulate if this address will be in the medium of English or Welsh.**

**It must be noted that the facility to address the Cabinet is at the discretion of the Chair and each request will be considered based on the agenda items being considered, the public interest/interest of the member in each matter and the demands of the business on that day. To make such a request please email:- [ExecutiveandRegulatoryBusinessUnit@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:ExecutiveandRegulatoryBusinessUnit@rctcbc.gov.uk)**

**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

To receive disclosures of personal interest from Members in accordance with the Code of Conduct

Note:

1. Members are requested to identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest: and
2. Where Members withdraw from a meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of a prejudicial interest they must notify the Chairman when they leave.

**2. MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of the Cabinet Committee on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020 as an accurate record.

**(Pages 5 - 12)**

**3. CABINET WORK PROGRAMME**

To receive the report of the Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication providing Cabinet Members with an update on the proposed list of matters requiring consideration by Cabinet over the 2020-21 Municipal Year.

**(Pages 13 - 44)**

**4. A4119 ELY VALLEY ROAD DUALLING - LLANTRISANT BUSINESS PARK TO COED ELY ROUNDABOUTS**

To receive the report of the Group Director, Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services, which updates Cabinet on the current progress related to the development and delivery of the major transportation project: A4119 Ely Valley Road Dualling – Llantrisant Business Park to Coed Ely Roundabouts and seeks to obtain delegated authority from Cabinet for the Group Director, Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services to submit a planning application on behalf of the Council for the proposed Active Travel bridge at Coed Ely Roundabout.

**(Pages 45 - 50)**

**5. WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION: DRAFT REGULATIONS TO ESTABLISH CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEES**

To receive the joint report of the Chief Executive, Director of Legal Services and Service Director of Democratic Services and Communication, which updates Members on the introduction of Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) as provided for in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill which is currently awaiting Royal Assent (anticipated to be granted in early 2021); asks Cabinet to consider draft regulations which would be made under that legislation in respect of the establishment and operation of CJCs; and seeks Members feedback on the consultation initiated by Welsh Government in respect of those draft regulations.

**(Pages 51 - 124)**

**6. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO STORM DENNIS**

To receive the report of the Chief Executive, which provides an overview of the Council's response to Storm Dennis and sets out a series of recommendations for Cabinet's consideration that enhance the Council's short term and long term response to extreme weather events and which limit the impact of flooding on those communities most at risk.

**(Pages 125 - 254)**

**7. URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any urgent business as the Chairman feels appropriate.



**Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication**

**Circulation:-**

**Councillors:** Councillor A Morgan (Chair)  
Councillor M Webber (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor R Bevan  
Councillor A Crimmings  
Councillor M Norris  
Councillor J Rosser  
Councillor R Lewis  
Councillor C Leyshon  
Councillor G Hopkins

**Officers:** Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive  
Christian Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication  
Gio Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services  
Nigel Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services  
Paul Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services  
Richard Evans, Director of Human Resources  
David Powell, Director of Corporate Estates  
Simon Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development  
Andy Wilkins, Director of Legal Services  
Barrie Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services  
Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
Derek James, Service Director – Prosperity & Development  
Paul Griffiths, Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services





**RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET**

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 17 November 2020 at 10.30 am

### **County Borough Councillors - Cabinet Members in attendance:-**

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)

Councillor M Webber	Councillor R Bevan
Councillor A Crimmings	Councillor M Norris
Councillor J Rosser	Councillor R Lewis
Councillor C Leyshon	Councillor G Hopkins

### **Officers in attendance**

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive  
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication  
Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services  
Mr N Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services  
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources  
Mr D Powell, Director of Corporate Estates  
Mr S Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development  
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services  
Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services  
Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
Mr P Griffiths, Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services  
Mr M Crumbie, Head of Procurement Delivery

## **23 Declaration of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, the following declarations of interest were received:-

- County Borough Councillor R Bevan declared 'As granted by the Standards Committee on the 29th November 2019, I have a dispensation to speak and vote on all matters relating to the Community and Children's Services Group, save for any specific matters that directly affect my daughter, who is employed by the Council in the Community and Children's Services Group'
- County Borough Councillor R Lewis declared a personal interest in respect of Item 3 – Brexit 'There is reference to foodbanks within the report and I am a volunteer with the Cynon Taf Trussell Trust Foodbank';
- County Borough Councillor G Hopkins declared a personal interest in respect of Item 7 – Community Infrastructure Levy Annual Monitoring Report 'The report refers to CIL and its impact on Community Councils and I am a Member of Llanharan Community Council';
- Mr N Wheeler, Group Director, Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services declared a personal and pecuniary interest in respect of Item 13 - Cynon Valley Waste Disposal Company Limited and Amgen Rhondda Limited Annual General Meeting and left the meeting when the item

- discussed “I am on the Amgen Board”
- Mr P Griffiths, Service Director, Performance and Improvement Services declared a personal and pecuniary interest in respect of Item 13 - Cynon Valley Waste Disposal Company Limited and Amgen Rhondda Limited Annual General Meeting and left the meeting when the item was discussed “I am on the Amgen Board”

## 24 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020 as an accurate record.

## 25 Brexit

The Head of Procurement Delivery provided the Cabinet with an update on the work that was underway across the Council to prepare for Brexit and identified the areas classified as the highest potential risk/impact.

The officer explained that the Council was currently faced with uncertainties surrounding the deal between the UK and EU, and emphasised the need for contingency plans to be in place for key frontline services that aim to manage interruptions are far as is practicably possible, particularly in relation to the supply of food and key commodities such as cleaning products and personal care.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services thanked the officer for the update and commented that it provided a degree of support to businesses, residents and the vulnerable in the community in what has and continued to be a difficult time., by identifying and mitigating the risks to supply chains and procurement.

The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services referred to Section 4.1 of the report and questioned how the Council is communicating the information to the residents. The Service Director, Democratic Services and Communication advised that the social media campaign would commence at the end of the week and would follow a similar approach to last year.

The Deputy Leader questioned how prepared the Local Authority was for any future implications to residents’ accessibility to foodbanks, should there be a shortage of food supplies and increased demand. The officer advised that regular meetings were taking place with food banks to identify their needs and to support them as much as possible.

The Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Housing sought an update on the Shared Prosperity Fund. The Leader informed the Cabinet Member of his discussion with the Secretary of State, whereby it was believed that it was the intention for the Chancellor to outline the Shared Prosperity Fund in the coming week. The Secretary of State had also indicated that it was the intention to honour the not a penny less commitment and that it appeared that funding would go directly through Local Authorities, with a preferred regional model.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To receive assurance that the Council is planning as best as it possibly can for Brexit;

2. To identify any other areas which they consider require further assurance; and
3. To review the areas identified as being the highest risk (section 1.2 above), and whether any others should be highlighted.

## **26 Council's Performance and Resources (Quarter 2)**

The Service Director, Performance and Improvement Services provided Members with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective, based on the first six months of the financial year (to the 30th September 2020).

The Service Director discussed in detail the Executive Summary of the report, which included financial data and progress against the Council's Corporate Plan priorities.

Members were informed of the second quarter revenue budget position, which was projecting a £1.853M overspend. Members acknowledged that the budget position was set in the unprecedented context of Covid-19 and takes into account additional Welsh Government funding received for the first six months of the year, and that forecasted to be received for the remainder of the year, in respect of additional expenditure incurred and income loss as a result of the pandemic.

The Cabinet Member, Corporate Services spoke positive of the report and in particular, the £32.5M Capital investment. The Member was also pleased to note that the decrease in sickness absence rate and the increase in staff numbers, which was partly due to the Council's appointment of a number of apprentices and graduates.

The Leader took the opportunity to commend officers for their financial management and commented that the position was fairly positive given the current circumstances.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the continued unprecedented circumstances Council Services are operating within as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Revenue**

2. To note and agree the General Fund revenue outturn position of the Council as at the 30th September 2020 (Section 2 of the Executive Summary) including the on-going Welsh Government Covid-19 funding to support service delivery.

### **Capital**

3. To note the capital outturn position of the Council as at the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 (Sections 3a – e of the Executive Summary).
4. To note the details of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as at the 30th September 2020 (Section 3f of the Executive Summary).

### **Corporate Plan Priorities**

5. To note the Quarter 2 progress updates for the Council's agreed Corporate Plan priorities (Sections 5 a – c of the Executive Summary).

## **27 Council Tax Base for 2021-22**

The Head of Revenues and Benefits provided the Cabinet with the report, which formally set out the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2021/22.

The officer advised that the gross Council Tax Base calculated for 2020/21 was £79,380.78 and proposed that the collection rate was to be estimated at 97.25%. This produces a net Council Tax Base of £77,197.81. This meant that for every £1 levied in Council Tax next year, a sum of £77,198 would be generated to meet the budget requirement of the Council.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services was happy to support the recommendations, noting that the report was considered on an annual basis as part of the Budget setting process.

The Leader thanked the officer for the report and it was **RESOLVED**:

1. That in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Wales) Regulations 1995 as amended, the amount calculated by the Council as its net tax base for the financial year 2021/22, shall be **£77,197.81**; and
2. That for each defined community area of the County Borough, the 2021/22 tax base for Council Tax setting purposes, shall be as set out at Appendix 1 of the report.

## **28 Public Services Ombudsman for Wales - Annual Report and Letter 2019-20**

The Director, Legal Services advised the Cabinet of the publication of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales' ('PSOW') Annual Report and Annual Letter to this Council for 2019-2020.

The Director advised that the number of complaints about local authorities across Wales reduced to 890 from 912 and of the 2,242 complaints received about public bodies, the top 5 categories related to health (41%), housing (15%), complaint handling (9%), social services (8%) and planning and building control (7%). The Director advised that in terms of local authorities specifically the main subjects were: Social Services (18%) Housing (16.9%) Planning and Building Control (15.4%) Environment and Environmental Health (10.6%) Complaint Handling (9%).

Members were informed that during 2019-2020 39 complaints (for periods 2018/2019 – 36 and 2017/2018 – 36) were received by the PSOW relating to the Authority which equates to 0.16 complaints per 1000 residents and represents the second lowest total in Wales out of the 22 authorities.

The Deputy Leader thanked the Director for the update and was pleased to note that RCT was the second lowest in Wales in terms of complaints. The Deputy Leader was concerned about the 22 complaints to the Ombudsman in respect of a small Community Council within RCT, but had been reassured that the Director and Chair of the Council's Standards Committee had addressed the Community Council. The Deputy Leader emphasised the importance of Heads of

Democratic Services providing appropriate standards training.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To consider and note the 2019-2020 Public Services Ombudsman for Wales' Annual Report and Annual Letter to the Council.

## **29 Community Infrastructure Levy Annual Monitoring Report**

The Director, Prosperity and Development provided Members with the report, which sought approval of the contents of the CIL Annual Monitoring Report and the proposed changes to the Regulation 123 List.

The Director also advised Members of the pre-scrutiny undertaken by the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee in respect of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

The Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Housing noted that the CIL receipts may seem lower than anticipated and explained that many sites were provided with consent prior to the implementation of CIL. The Cabinet Member highlighted the importance of the Council's 123 List and was pleased to note its additions, particularly Treforest Railway Station and the planned extension to the passenger line from Aberdare to Hirwaun.

The Deputy Leader added that a presentation was received by the Community Liaison Committee at its meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2020, to remind the Community Councils of their obligations.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To approve the CIL Annual Monitoring Report;
2. To approve the amended Regulation 123 List for publication on the Council website for a period of 28 days and consultation as set out in paragraph 5.9 of the report; and
3. To approve the subsequent adoption of the amended Regulation 123 List if no adverse comments are received.

## **30 Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects - Highway Asset Investment Strategy**

The Service Director, Frontline Services presented to Cabinet the report, which proposed the addition of carriageway and footway maintenance schemes to the pool of previously approved schemes, further to the approval of the Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects Capital Programme approved on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020 and subsequent to the report to Cabinet of 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

The Service Director drew Members' attention to Appendix 1, which included a further £2.210M of carriageways schemes and a further £0.496M of footways schemes to be added to the already approved pool.

The Leader was happy to support the recommendations and spoke of positive progress made in terms of delivery of schemes, despite the Covid-19 restrictions such as lockdowns and interruptions to supply and staffing. The Leader then referred to the efficient delivery of schemes, during Welsh Government's two week 'Firebreak' Lockdown, when traffic was lighter.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To note and approve the addition of the schemes listed in Appendix A of the report to the pools of previously approved schemes.

### **31 Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019-20**

The Group Director, Community and Children's Services provided Members with the Director, Social Services Annual Report. The Group Director explained that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there had been difficulties carrying out the usual level of public engagement, but assured the Cabinet that service users had been consulted as part of compiling the report. As such, the Group Director requested for the report to go through the Scrutiny process and avoid any wider public consultation.

The Group Director informed the Cabinet that the report set out the priorities for the 2020-21 Municipal Year but recognised that the substantial impact of Covid-19 could affect the delivery of those priorities.

Both the Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services & Welsh Language and the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People thanked the Group Director for the comprehensive report, despite the challenges faced by the service.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the draft Rhondda Cynon Taf Director of Social Services Annual Report and scrutinise its contents.

### **32 Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2019-20**

The Group Director, Community and Children's Services presented to Cabinet the Annual Report for 2019/20 for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board.

Both the Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services & Welsh Language and the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People reiterated their thanks to the Group Director for the report.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To note and endorse the content of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board Annual Report for 2019/20.

### **33 Cwm Taf Carers Annual Report 2019-20**

The Group Director, Community and Children's Services presented to Cabinet the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Carers Annual Report for 2019/20, for approval for submission to Welsh Government.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services & Welsh Language voiced his support for the report and commented that the pandemic had emphasised the importance of the role of carers.

The Cabinet Member for Children & Young People thanked the Group Director for the report and commented that it was disappointing that the Young Carers Annual Achievement Award Ceremony would not take place as a result of Covid-19 and social distancing restrictions, but was pleased to note that it would be held virtually.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To approve the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Carers Annual Report for 2019/20;
2. To note, as in previous years, that the Annual Report has been submitted in draft to Welsh Government, pending its approval by Cabinet and similar executive arrangements at Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend County Borough Councils and Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board. The final version will be sent to Welsh Government following approval by all four regional partners; and
3. To note the positive work undertaken relating to carers across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region in line with an agreed regional Statement of Intent for Carers (included within the Annual Report at Appendix 1)

**34 21st Century Schools Capital Programme - Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar**

The Director, Finance and Digital Services provided the Cabinet with an update regarding financing of the proposals to increase the capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar (YGG Aberdar) to meet the demand for Welsh medium school places.

The Director explained that following Cabinet's approval, at the meeting on 20th September 2018, to develop and submit a 21st Century Schools Programme financial business case to the Welsh Government to increase the capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar to meet the demand for Welsh medium school places, an award of funding was received on 4th November 2020.

Members were informed that the total cost had increased to £4.5M from £3.3M as the project now incorporated a new childcare facility but were pleased to note that the Welsh Government intervention rate had since increased to 65% from 50%, which meant the Council's funding requirement had decreased to 35%.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Inclusion Services was pleased to note that the financial business plan submitted to Welsh Government had been successful and commented that it would be a positive way forward in meeting the target of increasing the number of Welsh Medium speakers within RCT.

The Leader was pleased to note the additional funding provided by Welsh Government and the overall percentage of match funding for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the updated position on the outcome of the submission of a financial business case to Welsh Government;
2. To review and agree the updated total costs and funding package; and
3. To propose that the attached Prudential Borrowing report at Appendix A is presented to Council on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

**35 To consider passing the following Resolution:**

It was **RESOLVED:** "That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act".

**Cynon Valley Waste Disposal Company Limited and Amgen Rhondda Limited Annual General Meeting**

(Note: Having previously declared an interest (Minute No. 23), the Service Director, Performance and Improvement Services and the Group Director, Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services left the meeting prior to this item)

The Director, Legal Services provided Members with an overview of his report which contained exempt information. Members were referred to the appendices of the report which provided the financial statements of the Companies which are to be presented to the Annual General Meetings ('AGM's') of the Cynon Valley Waste Disposal Company Limited and Amgen Rhondda Limited (the 'Companies'), to be held virtually at 09:30 a.m. on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the current intention to continue the operation of Cynon Valley Waste Disposal Company Limited and Amgen Rhondda Limited (the 'Companies') as Local Authority controlled companies into the future is confirmed;
2. That subject to the Director of Finance and Digital Services being satisfied that there are no irregularities in the accounts of the Companies that the accounts be received on behalf of the Council;
3. That Azets Audit Services are appointed as auditors to the Companies for the year-ending 31st March 2021;
4. That the Directorships of the Group Director – Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services and the Service Director – Finance and Improvement Services for both Companies continue;
5. To note the continuation of the non-executive director position on the Board of the Companies through to 31st December 2021;
6. That the Director of Legal Services and/or his nominee be authorised to exercise the Council's vote at the Annual General Meetings of the Companies in accordance with recommendations 2(ii) to 2(iv) above; and
7. That the Council be represented at the Companies' Annual General Meetings by a Cabinet Member.

**This meeting closed at 11.15 am**

**Cllr A Morgan  
Chairman.**



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

**18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

#### **CABINET WORK PROGRAMME: 2020 - 2021 MUNICIPAL YEAR.**

#### **REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL.**

**Author:** Hannah Williams, Democratic Services (01443 424062)

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To present, for Cabinet Members' comment and approval, an update on the Cabinet Work Programme on the proposed list of matters requiring consideration by Cabinet over the 2020-2021 Municipal Year. The Work Programme will guide and direct the activities of other arms of the Council, as well as the Cabinet itself.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet approve the Work Programme for the 2020-2021 Municipal Year (with appropriate amendment where necessary) and receive a further update on a 3 monthly basis.

#### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 In accordance with paragraph 12.1 (Part 4) of the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet Work Programme should be prepared to cover a period of three months, with an updated version provided at the end of this period.
- 3.2 Following the amendments to the Leaders Scheme of Delegation at the Council AGM on the 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2016 it was agreed that going forward a detailed Cabinet Work Programme be published for a 6 month period, allowing sufficient notice and opportunity for consultation and / or pre scrutiny.
- 3.3 The updated Work Programme is attached to this report for Members' consideration and covers the 2020-2021 Municipal Year.
- 3.4 For ease of reference the work programme will also be available on the main Cabinet webpage for Members and members of the public information.

#### **4. CABINET REPORTS**

- 4.1 The proposed work programme is a rolling work programme for the 2020 - 2021 Municipal Year, which is reported to Cabinet on a 3 month cycle to allow for regular updates and amendments.
- 4.2 An updated work programme is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 4.3 During the period outlined, the Work Programme may be subject to further change to take into account any additional/deletion reports, including any new consultative documents or legislative initiatives from the Welsh Government, which require urgent attention.
- 4.4 In accordance with paragraph 2.5 (Part 4) of the Council's Constitution, any Member of the Council may also request the Leader to put an item on the agenda of a Cabinet meeting. There is also the ability for a resolution to be made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the full Council that an item be considered by the Cabinet, which could alter the forward Work Programme.
- 4.5 The 2020 - 2021 Cabinet Work Programme is published on the main Cabinet page of the Website to again assist Members of the public, by improving transparency. The Work Programme link can be accessed on the following '[Cabinet Work Programme](#)'.

#### **5. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT**

- 5.1 The work programme has been compiled by members of the Senior Leadership Team in discussion with the relevant portfolio holder(s) and has been consulted upon with the relevant scrutiny committees in respect of pre-scrutiny.

#### **6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

#### **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

#### **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 The report has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 12.1 (Part 4) of the Council's Constitution.

**9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES.**

- 9.1 The Cabinet work programme encompasses all of the Council priorities as it indicates reports coming forward across the Directorates which may impact upon the Council's corporate priorities and others. It also embraces the Future Generations Acts as all future decisions taken by the Cabinet seek to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the County Borough.

**10. CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 An updated Cabinet work programme for the 2020-2021 Municipal Year is attached.

**Other Information:-**

**Relevant Scrutiny Committee – Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

**CABINET WORK PROGRAMME: 2020- 2021 MUNICIPAL YEAR.**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL.**

**Item: CABINET WORK PROGRAMME: 2020- 2021 MUNICIPAL YEAR.**

### **Background Papers**

- Paragraph 12.1 (Part 4) of the Council's Constitution.

Officer to contact: Hannah Williams, Democratic Services

## Cabinet Work Programme.

Forward plan of proposed Cabinet Business for the 2020/21 Municipal Year

Specific Period: -September 2020 – May 2021.

(Summary of proposed Key Decisions coming forward for Cabinet Members consideration.)

*N.B – The work programme is subject to change to take account of any additional / deletion of reports, including any new consultative documents or legislative initiatives from the Welsh Government, which require urgent attention.*

Contact: Hannah Williams (Tel No. 01443 424062)

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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## Chief Executive

Cabinet Work Programme	In line with the Council's Constitution there is a need to advise and publish the Cabinet Work Programme.	Continuous		Every 3 months June 20 September 20 December 20 March 21	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet Members</li> <li>• SLT</li> <li>• Overview &amp; Scrutiny</li> </ul>
Council's Performance & Resources Report	To provide Cabinet with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective	Continuous		Quarter 4 – July 2020  Quarter 1 – September 2020  Quarter 2 – November 2020  Quarter 3 – March 2021	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services - B Davies	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report is presented to Finance &amp; Performance Scrutiny Committee following consideration by Cabinet</li> </ul>
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>							
Leader's Scheme of Delegation	To formally receive the Leader's Scheme of Delegation following the 2020 Council AGM	Complete	Cabinet	September 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet Members</li> </ul>

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Supplementary Capital Programmes – ‘Education and Inclusion Services’ and ‘Highways, Transportation & Strategic projects’	To provide details and obtain approval for phase 2 of the proposed supplementary capital programmes for Education & Inclusion Services and Highways, Transportation & Strategic Projects.	Complete	Cabinet	September 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan.  Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	
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**OCTOBER**

Medium Term Financial Plan Update	To provide Members with an update on the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2020/21 – 2023/24 (mid-year budget review)	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services - B Davies	Open	
Corporate Performance Report	To consider the Council’s Corporate Performance Report and recommend its endorsement by Council	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Chief Executive – C Bradshaw	Open	
Budget Consultation	To inform Members	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Councillor M Webber	Open	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Report	of the proposed approach to resident engagement and consultation in respect of the 2021 /22 budget.				Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan C Hanagan		

**NOVEMBER**

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Cynon Valley Waste Disposal Company Limited and Amgen Rhondda Limited – Annual General Meeting	To provide Members with details of the AGM in respect of the Cynon Valley Waste Disposal Company Ltd and Amgen Rhondda Ltd.	Complete	Cabinet	November 2020	Councillor A Crimmings Director of Legal Services - A Wilkins	Exempt	
Council Tax Base	To receive the report in respect of setting the Council Tax Base 2021/22	Complete	Cabinet	November 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	

**DECEMBER**




Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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### JANUARY

Corporate Asset Management Plan Interim Update	To brief members on progress with the plan		Cabinet	January 2021	Councillor M Norris. Director of Corporate Estates – D Powell	Exempt	
Digital Strategy Work - Update	To provide Members with an update in respect of the Digital Strategy Work Programme	Complete	Cabinet	January 2021	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) - Use of RIPA in 2019-20 by RCTCBC	To enable Members to review the Council's use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ('RIPA')		Cabinet	January 2021	Deputy Leader, Councillor M Webber. Director of Legal & Services – A Wilkins	Open	
Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report	To consider the Annual report of the Corporate Parenting Board.		Cabinet	January 2021	Cllr C Leyshon Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan C Hanagan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Parenting Board</li> <li>Children &amp; Young People Scrutiny</li> </ul>

### FEBRUARY

Budget Report	The need to adopt a budget strategy to recommend to Council as the basis		Cabinet	February 2021	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget Consultation - Service Users, School Budget Forum and Finance and Performance Scrutiny</li> </ul>
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	of the budget strategy for the financial year ending March 2022, following consideration of the consultation feedback				Davies		Committee.
Council Fees & Charges	The need to advise Cabinet of the proposed Council Fees and Charges for the financial year 2021/22		Cabinet	February 2021	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	
General Data Protection Review Update	To receive an update in respect of the GDPR		Cabinet	February 2021	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	
Capital Programme	To propose to Council the three year capital programme		Cabinet	February 2021	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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### MARCH

Annual Equalities Report	To receive the report of the Director, Human Resources in respect of the Annual Equalities Report.		Cabinet	March 2021	Deputy Leader, Councillor M Webber Director, Human Resources – R Evans	Open	Overview & Scrutiny Committee

### APRIL

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### MAY

Strategic Equality Plan	To provide Members with details of the Councils Strategic Equality plan		Cabinet	May 2021	Deputy Leader, Councillor M Webber Director, Human Resources – R Evans	Open	
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### ON GOING UPDATES

The Council's Response to Covid-19	To formally receive a service update on the Council's service response to the Covid-19 pandemic	Continuous	Cabinet	When Applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan, Chief Executive – C Bradshaw	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet Members</li> <li>• SLT</li> <li>• Overview &amp; Scrutiny</li> </ul>
RCT Flooding Update	To receive updates in respect of flooding in Rhondda Cynon Taf in		Cabinet	When Applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan, Chief Executive – C		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	addition to statutory reporting requirements into flooding.				Bradshaw		
Brexit	To receive a verbal update in respect of Brexit		Cabinet	When appropriate	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Chief Executive – C Bradshaw	Open	
Cardiff Capital Region - City Deal	The need to advise of the progress being made in respect of the City Deal		Cabinet	When Applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan & Chief Executive, C Bradshaw	Open	
Staff Panel Report	To receive details of the proposals put forward by the Council's Staff Panel in respect of efficiency savings and smarter ways of working		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor M Webber & Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication - C Hanagan	Open	
Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group Recommendations	To receive recommendations coming forward following consideration by the Climate Change		Cabinet	When Applicable	Specific to the report	Open	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	Cabinet Steering Group						
Scrutiny Recommendations	To receive recommendations coming forward following a scrutiny review.		Cabinet	Continuous	Specific to the Scrutiny Review undertaken	Open	
Write off of irrecoverable Debts	To update Cabinet with a position statement on irrecoverable debts		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan & Councillor M Norris. Director, Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Exempt	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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## Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

### SEPTEMBER

Review of Regeneration Business Support Grants	To seek approval to refocus the existing business support grant schemes delivered by the Regeneration Service, and to establish three further schemes – the Town Centre COVID 19 Recovery Grant, the Major Projects Investment Fund and the Flood Resilience Grant.	Complete	Cabinet	September 2020	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale	Open	
Cynon Gateway North (Aberdare Bypass)	To update Cabinet on the current progress related to the development and delivery of the major	Complete	Cabinet	September 2020	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development &	Open	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	transportation project: Cynon Gateway North (Aberdare Bypass).				Frontline Services – N Wheeler		
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**OCTOBER**

Kick Start Scheme for Young People Aged 16-24 Years	To seek approval for an application to become a Gateway employer under the Department of Work and Pensions' Kickstart Scheme so that the Council will be able to make applications on behalf of small and medium-sized businesses with less than 30 placements for young people;	Complete	Delegated Decision	October 2020	Joint Decision of the Group Director, Prosperity & Development, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services and the Director of Human Resources	Open	
Proposed introduction of a new Domestic Heating Grant	To provide a new Heating Grant funded from the Capital Housing Programme to support the strategic objectives contained	Complete	Delegated Decision	October 2020	Group Director, Prosperity & Development Councillor R Bevan	Open	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	with the Council's Warmer Homes: A Fuel Poverty Strategy 2009-2023.						
Active Travel: Review of Integrated Travel Map	To seek Members' approval to commence a review, including a public engagement exercise, of the Council's existing Active Travel Integrated Network Map (ATINM). This report also outlines the reasons for undertaking this exercise.	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Councillor A Crimmings. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Open	

### NOVEMBER

Highways, Transportation And Strategic Projects - Highway Asset Investment Strategy	To provide Members with the highway asset investment strategy	Complete	Cabinet	November 2020	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Open	
Community infrastructure levy	CIL regulations require a report to	Complete	Cabinet	November	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finance and Performance</li> </ul>	



Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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annual monitoring report	update Cabinet on the performance of CIL during the last year and make any amendments deemed necessary.			2020	& Development - S Gale	Scrutiny Committee	

**DECEMBER**

<b>JANUARY</b>							

**FEBRUARY**

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**MARCH**

Supplementary Capital Programme - Highways, Transportation & Strategic projects	The need to seek approval for detailed investment within the service following Council's approval of the 3 year Capital Programme.		Cabinet	March 2021	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Open	
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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**APRIL**

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**MAY**

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**ONGOING UPDATES**

Processing Of Mixed Kerbside Recycling	To provide Members with an update in respect of the opportunities of investment into processing of Mixed Kerbside Recycling		Cabinet		Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Exempt	
Highways Investment Scheme	To receive regular updates in respect of the Highways Investment Scheme		Cabinet		Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Review of Mainstream School Transport Provision	Need to provide Cabinet with the outcomes of the periodic review of the Council's mainstream School Transport Provision		Cabinet	Periodic Review / when applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Open	
Porth Town Centre Strategy	To receive updates as and when applicable		Cabinet	When appropriate	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale		
Taff Vale Update and Business Plan	Taff Vale Update Report.		Cabinet	When appropriate	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale	Open	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Scrutiny Recommendations	To receive any recommendations coming forward following a scrutiny review.		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Specific to Scrutiny Review undertaken	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny</li> </ul>
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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## Community & Children's Services

### SEPTEMBER

Establishing a Social Letting Agency	To inform Cabinet of the proposal to establish a Social Letting Agency.	Complete	Cabinet	September 2020	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services	Open	
Approval for RCT Theatres to produce a Digital Christmas Performance	To provide Cabinet Members with information in relation to the proposal for RCT Theatres to produce a digital Christmas performance to share online in December 2020.	Complete		September 2020	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services	Open	
Proposed Extension and Variation to Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC's Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Orders	To inform Members of the outcomes of the public consultation exercise and to seek authority to extend	Complete	Cabinet	September 2020	Cllr R Lewis Cllr C Crimmings Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services Group Director,		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	the two Public Spaces Protection Orders relating to dog controls in Rhondda Cynon Taf (the Dog Control PSPO's).				Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services		
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**OCTOBER**

Cwm Taf Safeguarding Annual Plan	To receive the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Annual Plan	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Councillor G Hopkins, Cllr T Leyshon Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Firework Controls	To receive information on Firework Controls following the Council NOM.	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services	Open	
Social Services Annual Complaints Report	Provide Cabinet with an overview of the operation & effectiveness of the Council's Social Services complaints procedure	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Councillor G Hopkins Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Corporate Parenting Board

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Funding for Food Banks and Mental Health Support during 'firebreak' lockdown	To approve £25,000 to support local food banks and mental health support during the Welsh Government's national "firebreak" lockdown and the subsequent weeks ahead.	Complete	Delegated Decision	October 2020	Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services  Councillor R Lewis Councillor A Morgan	Open	
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## NOVEMBER

Bereavement Services – Concessionary Charges In Exceptional Circumstances	That a financial concession is to be afforded to families requiring multiple funeral services within their close family circle. This concession is to be applied during exceptional circumstances (e.g. global pandemic).	Complete	Delegated Decision	November 2020	Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services  Councillor R Lewis	Open	
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Director Social Services Annual Report	To receive the final report of the Director, Social Services prior to its	Complete	Cabinet	November 2020	Councillors G Hopkins & T Leyshon. Group Director Community & Children's	Open	Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee  Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	publication				Services – G Isingrini		Committee
Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board Annual Report	In accordance with the SSWB Act, the need to report the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Annual Report to the Cabinet, setting out their priorities for the coming year.	Complete	Cabinet	November 2020	Councillor G Hopkins & Councillor C Leyshon Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board</li> </ul>
Cwm Taf Carer's Annual Report	To approve for submission to WG the annual report.	Complete	Cabinet	November 2020	Councillor G Hopkins & Group Director Community & Children's Services - G Isingrini	Open	multi agency Cwm Taf Carers Partnership
Publication of 2020 Air Quality Progress Report	To publish the 2020 Air Quality Progress Report	Complete	Delegated Decision	November 2020	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services	Open	

**DECEMBER**


**JANUARY**

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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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National Adoption Annual Report	To receive the National Adoption Annual Report		Cabinet	January 2021	C Leyshon and Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
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**FEBRUARY**

The Council's response to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation	To receive the Council's response to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation		Cabinet	February 2021	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services		
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Specialist Placements	To receive information on Specialist Placements.		Cabinet	February 2021	Councillor C Leyshon Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		
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**MARCH**

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**APRIL**

<b>APRIL</b>							
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Hires and Prices Reviews	To receive information of the review of Hires and Prices		Cabinet	April 2021	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services		
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**MAY**

Provision of Cemeteries within RCT	To receive information on the provision of cemeteries in RCT		Cabinet	May 2021	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services		
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**ONGOING UPDATES**

Modernisation of Residential Care and Day Care for Older People – Consultation feedback	To receive the consultation feedback		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins, Group Director Community & Children’s Services – G Isingrini		Overview and Scrutiny Committee
SS&WB Board Development	To consider any updates as appropriate in respect of the SS&WB Board		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins. Group Director Community & Children’s Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Regional Transformation Agenda	To receive an update on the		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins and Group Director		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	regional transformation agenda				Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		
Development of Community Hubs	To consider the development of Community Hubs across the County Borough		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor R Lewis Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services	Open	
Extra Care Strategy	To receive update reports on the Councils progress in respect of delivery of the Extra Care Strategy		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins. Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Advocacy	To provide Cabinet with an update in respect of advocacy		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins and Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		
Cwm Taf MASH Annual Report	To receive the Annual report of the Cwm Taf MASH		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins. Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Social Services & Wellbeing Act	To provide updates as and when necessary on the Council's duties in respect of the Act		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins. Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Local Air Quality Management Reports	To provide details of the Local Air Quality Management Reports		Delegated Decision	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor R Lewis Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services	Open	
Scrutiny Recommendations	To receive any recommendations coming forward following a scrutiny review.		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Specific to Scrutiny Review undertaken	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny</li> </ul>

## Education & Inclusion Services

### SEPTEMBER

21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools and	To provide Members	Complete	Cabinet	September	Councillor J Rosser &	Open	
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Page 41	Colleges Programme – Mutual Investment Model Welsh Education Partnership Strategic Partnering Agreement	with an update on the Mutual Investment Model (MIM) funding element of Welsh Government’s 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme and to inform Members of progress Welsh Government has made in procuring a private sector partner to assist with the delivery of education and community facilities in Wales, under the MIM 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.			2020	Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies	

**OCTOBER**

Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2&3 and Key Stage 4 outcomes for 2019	To provide Members with initial feedback on the Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2, 3 & 4 outcomes for	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Councillor J Rosser & Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies	Open	
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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2019.

**NOVEMBER**

**DECEMBER**

**JANUARY**

Key stage 4 and 5 outcomes	To receive the final data from Welsh Government in respect of the Educational Outcomes for RCT		Cabinet	January 2021	Councillor J Rosser & Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies	Open	
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**FEBRUARY**

**MARCH**

Childcare Sufficiency Update - Prescrutiny	The need to provide details of the Childcare Sufficiency Audit undertaken, in line with Welsh Government Requirements		Cabinet	March 2021	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies; Childcare Officer - D Humphries	Open	Children & Young People Scrutiny committee
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Supplementary Capital Programme – Education & Inclusion Services	The need to seek Cabinet approval for further detailed investment within the service following Council's approval of the 3 year Capital Programme.		Cabinet	March 2021	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies	Open	
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**APRIL**

**MAY**

**ONGOING UPDATES**

Scrutiny Recommendations	To receive any recommendations coming forward following a scrutiny review.		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Specific to Scrutiny Review undertaken	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutiny</li> </ul>
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools	To receive any updates in respect of the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies	Open	



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

**18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

### **A4119 ELY VALLEY ROAD DUALLING – LLANTRISANT BUSINESS PARK TO COED ELY ROUNDABOUTS**

#### **REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT AND FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE LEADER**

**Author(s): Andrew Griffiths, Service Director Highways and Transportation**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to;
- Update Cabinet on the current progress related to the development and delivery of the major transportation project: A4119 Ely Valley Road Dualling – Llantrisant Business Park to Coed Ely Roundabouts.
  - Obtain delegated authority from Cabinet for the Group Director Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services to submit a planning application on behalf of the Council for the proposed Active Travel bridge at Coed Ely Roundabout.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1.1 Note the progress made and endorse the next steps in the programme for the project.
- 2.1.2 Give delegated authority to the Group Director Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services to submit a planning application on behalf of the Council for the proposed Active Travel bridge at Coed Ely roundabout.

#### **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Details on the benefits of the project are indicated in Cabinet Report of 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018. Please click [here](#).

#### **4.0 BACKGROUND AND UPDATED POSITION**

- 4.1 Preliminary design of the project has been completed and it is now currently at detailed design stage which is due to be complete in Spring 2021.
- 4.2 As part of the continual value engineering of the project, the roundabout servicing the South Wales Fire Service Headquarters has been retained. Originally it was being considered to be removed with a new dedicated entrance to the Headquarters off Sterling Drive on Llantrisant Business Park. However upon investigation, the accommodation works required for the new entrance required extensive engineering works which would have resulted in increasing the cost of the project by a further £2m. The net effect of retaining the roundabout has resulted in potential loss of journey time saving of 5 seconds per vehicle.
- 4.3 At the Coed Ely roundabout, there is an existing desire line for pedestrians and cyclists who currently cross the existing single carriageway. The preliminary design proposals included for the provision of an Active Travel compliant underpass for the safe passage of pedestrians and cyclists. During the detailed design, discussions were held with the Welsh Government who are developing the Coed Ely site north of the roundabout. As part of their planning approval a shared cycle/pedestrian bridge is needed to be provided north of the Coed Ely roundabout to link the development site to Ely Valley Road. The Council has agreed in partnership working with the Welsh Government to provide an Active Travel compliant foot/cycle bridge instead of an underpass at the Coed Ely roundabout which will serve the development site as well as providing an Active Travel route. Welsh Government is working with the Council to address the additional costs.
- 4.4 Representation has been made by the British Horse Society via local AM and MP's for the provision of the proposed bridge to accommodate equestrians, together with Local Members. A survey of users of the existing unofficial crossing at Coed Ely roundabout in April 2019 over a week, indicated the use by 2 equestrians each way on one day only. A report was commissioned from Redstart into the investigation of the proposed Active Travel bridge to accommodate equestrians. The report highlighted a number of safety concerns, lack of current users, no bridleways, increased land take and increased costs, resulting in the recommendation that equestrian users are not accommodated in the proposed bridge. It is proposed to follow the recommendation and only provide an Active Travel bridge for pedestrians and cyclists. A planning application for the proposed bridge will be submitted shortly.
- 4.5 All ecological survey work has been completed and ecological mitigation measures are currently being designed including the provision of 2

number culverts under the carriageway for use by low flying bats, all in accordance with best practice.

- 4.6 Discussions are ongoing with statutory undertakers for their works to be undertaken in advance where possible and these include significant Dwr Cymru Welsh Water works. There will also be a requirement to divert a water pumping main to the Royal Mint which will have to be coordinated as the “downtime” for connections is only 8 hours.
- 4.7 Advance BT works to provide an alternative line to safeguard South Wales Fire Service headquarters communications networks has recently been completed which will minimise risk during construction.
- 4.7 Advance spraying of invasive species ie Japanese Knotweed has recently been undertaken with the prior consent of the private landowners concerned.
- 4.8 All the land for the project and its construction has been identified and discussions have been ongoing between the Council and the private landowners’ agents for the land concerned. To date no parcels of private land have been purchased.
- 4.9 It is anticipated that the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) will be made in November and submitted to the Welsh Government for confirmation. The Council will be required to notify all relevant parties of the making of the CPO and undertake advertisements in the press in accordance with legislation.
- 4.11 It has been identified that a number of private access ways will need to be stopped up to provide the dualling scheme. Alternative access will be provided in lieu of these access ways and a stopping up order will be submitted to the Welsh Ministers for confirmation with the CPO.
- 4.12 Subject to a successful planning application for the bridge, completion of the CPO and all statutory procedures, it is envisaged that the main construction works will commence on site in early Spring 2022.

## **5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment Screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full report is not required. It should be noted in respect of equestrians the issue highlighted in point 4.4.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 Consultation continues with the stakeholders and parties affected by the A4119 dualling proposals and these include the Council's departments, Welsh Government, statutory bodies, statutory undertakers and third parties whose land is required for the proposals.
- 6.2 Consultation with landowners, public, Local Members, etc will be undertaken in respect of the planning application for the proposed Active Travel footbridge.

## **7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

- 7.1 The current estimated cost for the project is approximately £16m which is inclusive of risk, additional ecology works, construction, fees, land, etc. As the project progresses through the detailed design stage, the estimated costs will be further refined. Note the Benefits Cost Ratio is 2.6 based on the revised costs. This means that every £1 spent on the project, will generate £2.60 worth of benefits.
- 7.2 A total of £1.3m funding has been received from the Welsh Government between 2017/18 and 2020/21 via the Local Transport Network Fund for the project.
- 7.3 A total of £6.1m funding to date has been committed by the Council via its investment programme.
- 7.4 On 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018 the Cabinet agreed in principle to a £300m investment programme over the next 5 years and included in that was a sum of £65M for Highways and Transportation Infrastructure projects and A4119 dualling project specifically.

## **8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 The main legislation considered for the proposals detailed in this report are the Acquisition of Land Act 1991, Highways Act 1980 and Town and Country Planning Act 1990

## **9 LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.**

- 9.1 The A4119 Ely Valley Road dualling Coed Ely to Llantrisant Business park roundabouts supports a number of the authorities' own plans, policies and strategies that relate not only to transport, but the wider local agenda. Full details of these can be found in Cabinet Report of 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018. Please click [here](#)

**10 CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 The benefits of the provision of the dualling to this strategic highway has been highlighted in the Cabinet Report of 24<sup>th</sup> July 2018.
- 10.2 The removal of the new dedicated access from Sterling Drive to the South Wales Fire Service and maintenance of the existing access roundabout on the A4119 will alleviate costly mitigation works whilst not affecting the overall performance of the dualling project.
- 10.3 A planning application be submitted for the proposed new Active Travel bridge and not cater for equestrian use.

**Other Information:-**

***Relevant Scrutiny Committee***

**[ARTICLE 6 – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE](#)**

(Terms of Reference of each of the Scrutiny Committees to assist Officers with selecting the correct Committee.)

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020**





## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CABINET

18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020

### WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION: DRAFT REGULATIONS TO ESTABLISH CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEES

#### JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES AND SERVICE DIRECTOR - DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATIONS IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to

- (i) Update Members on the introduction of Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) as provided for in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill which is currently awaiting Royal Assent (anticipated to be granted in early 2021);
- (ii) to consider draft regulations which would be made under that legislation in respect of the establishment and operation of CJCs; and
- (iii) seek Members feedback on the consultation initiated by Welsh Government in respect of those draft regulations.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Consider and provide their feedback on the [Welsh Government \(WG\) Consultation document](#), attached at Appendix 2 to the report, which relates to draft regulations that would establish the South East Wales CJC and then exercise the following functions across the region; (1) economic well-being, (2) strategic development planning, and (3) developing transport policies; and
- 2.2 Give delegated authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to complete the final written response to the WG consultation based on Members' feedback at the meeting and feedback received from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and submit that response to WG prior to the consultation closing.

### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The formation of CJC's as provided for in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill will alter the landscape and governance of how certain functions are undertaken by the constituent councils making up the CJC across the South East Wales Region. WG hope they act as the catalyst to the development and implementation of collaborative arrangements across local government, where regional planning and delivery makes sense, using them as a means of maximising outcomes for the people of Wales by maintaining local democratic accountability, reducing complexity and making the best use of resources
- 3.2 WG have published [draft regulations](#) which would establish the South East Wales CJC and set out how the CJC would operate. They have initiated a consultation on those regulations which ends on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021.
- 3.3 WG have said they welcome input to ensure the regulations are shaped by local authorities to ensure they reflect local/regional requirements. Members therefore have the opportunity, through the consultation, to provide any feedback they have in relation to the draft regulations and CJCs more generally.

### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill introduced into the Senedd in November 2019 included (in Part 5) provisions to create via regulations a vehicle for consistent regional collaboration between principal councils - CJCs. The provisions also enable the constituent principal councils to invite participation by partners from other sectors in the work of CJCs through a process of co-opted membership. The constitutional and governance arrangements as well as the functions of the CJC will be set out in the regulations establishing them. The Bill sets out what the regulations will provide for to enable the effective establishment of CJCs. However, the Bill does not detail the specific functions of a CJC or how it will be governed. This is all done via the regulations.
- 4.2 Welsh Government (WG) maintain that the model of CJCs, outlined later in the report, builds on the best that has already been achieved in the development of regional arrangements in different parts of Wales.
- 4.3 WG's aim is to ensure there are consistent, resilient and accountable regional arrangements for the delivery of three important functions (i) strategic land use planning (ii) strategic transport planning and (iii) economic development. This approach is seen as all the more important given the COVID 19 pandemic as ways are found to help Wales recover.
- 4.4 Importantly WG recognise that collaboration is not new to local government, principal councils have been collaborating effectively in a range of areas for a long time. None more so than this Council of course,



with Rhondda Cynon Taf playing a significant role in established collaborations across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg footprint and wider South Wales region. Several of these collaborations, they say will be easily accommodated by the Corporate Joint Committees. Others require a less consistent approach across Wales and will continue to use existing governance arrangements.

- 4.5 WG believe that by establishing CJC's through regulations it will provide more coherence and less complexity in the approach to regional governance arrangements in exercising the three functions proposed. Their aim is to reduce complexity and duplication of effort and resource. WG hope they act as the catalyst to the development and implementation of collaborative arrangements across local government, where regional planning and delivery makes sense, using them as a means of maximising outcomes for the people of Wales by maintaining local democratic accountability, reducing complexity and making the best use of resources.

## **5. KEY FEATURES OF A CJC**

- 5.1 In contrast to other joint committee structures, CJCs will be separate corporate bodies and legal entities to their constituent councils which will be able to directly employ staff, hold assets and budgets, and be directly responsible for exercising functions.
- 5.2 A CJC will not be the only vehicle through which local government can collaborate but the intention is to provide local government with a powerful new tool where appropriate.
- 5.3 CJCs aim to offer a consistent approach to strategic planning and delivery at a scale where it makes sense to do so. WG believe they will help to align the key strategic decisions which underpin the sustainable development and transformation of regions as a whole.

### ***Functions***

- 5.4 CJCs will have functions that cover economic well-being, strategic planning (LDPs will remain with LAs) and transport.
- 5.5 The economic wellbeing power is potentially wide-ranging and significant, but how far it is used will be determined by a CJC. The suggestion is that the current city and growth deal strategic functions would be transferred to CJCs.
- 5.6 Concurrency of functions has been a concern to some LA's, as they want to ensure a local economic development function as well as a regional one. The draft regulations make clear that this is a 'matter for each CJC in response to local and regional needs'.
- 5.7 School improvement' (although in the Bill) does not feature as an early priority for inclusion in the CJCs consultation document. The Bill specifies that CJCs will include only the 4 listed functions in the Bill (which are existing statutory or voluntary regional functions). CJCs can voluntarily make a request to Ministers to add specific functions to a CJC. A future

Welsh Government could however add other functions to a CJC via future legislation which would amend Section 74 of the Bill (the section specifying the 4 CJC functions).

### ***Membership***

- 5.8 The membership of a CJC will be the Leaders of the constituent local authorities ensuring Leaders are at the centre of the decision making process.
- 5.9 Leaders, following advice/recommendations from any relevant subcommittees, will be responsible for making final decisions relating to the functions exercised by a CJC.
- 5.10 The CJC, via the Leaders, will be able to co-opt additional members (either cabinet members or other partners) to it or any of its sub committees (if it has chosen to establish any) as it sees fit and should it wish to do so. Such membership can be co-opted with or without voting rights and voting rights can be ascribed to all of the functions of a CJC or to specific functions only.
- 5.11 The expectation would be that the CJC would use the flexibility to co-opt members to ensure appropriate stakeholder engagement relevant to the functions which they are exercising.
- 5.12 National park members (Brecon Beacons NPA in relation to this authority) must also be a member when dealing with SDP functions

### ***Establishing Corporate Joint Committees***

- 5.13 The primary route for establishing CJCs, or expanding the functions they are responsible for, is at the request of local government.
- 5.14 Welsh Ministers can instigate the establishment of CJCs in relation to a limited number of specified functions only. These functions are in relation to Strategic Development Planning and Regional Transport Planning; plus the CJCs will be given a power to do things to promote the economic well-being of their areas. There is already consensus that working at this scale makes sense in terms of these functions - aligning economic development, transport and land use planning approaches to develop successful regional economies and encourage local growth. It is intended that CJCs will enable the consolidation of existing regional arrangements. It also enables the rationalisation of regional working approaches in legislation for planning and transport.

### ***How a Corporate Joint Committee will operate***

- 5.15 The detail on how a CJC operates in practice will be determined by the members of the CJC itself.
- 5.16 This flexibility will enable the CJCs to differ between geographical areas to meet the different needs and ambitions of their region.
- 5.17 A CJC will be a member of the 'local government family' and, where appropriate, will largely be subject to the same powers and duties as principal councils in the way that they operate. The intent is to avoid as far

as possible making CJs do things in a manner that local government would be unfamiliar with or to create new and unfamiliar procedures, obligations, powers etc. which might increase administrative burdens.

### ***Sub committees***

- 5.18 A CJC will be able to establish sub committees to support it to exercise its functions should it wish to do so.
- 5.19 It will be for each CJC to decide if it wishes to have sub-committees, and who sits on them. However it might be reasonable to expect (although it is not required) for a CJC to have sub-committees for each of its main functions and that these sub-committees might engage broadly and involve a range of relevant stakeholders.

### ***Voting***

- 5.20 Voting will operate on a 'one member one vote' basis, however, once established, a CJC could adopt alternative voting procedures should they wish
- 5.21 Some member authorities remain concerned that OMOV is not equitable or fair given the different sizes of authorities which would undermine accountability.
- 5.22 The model of a CJC and its subcommittees offers a fusion between the need to involve partners and the need to ensure decisions are coherent across functions and maintain democratic legitimacy. As stated above, it is the CJC, consisting of all Leaders from all constituent authorities (plus co-opted members if Leaders choose) that would make final decisions with a view to ensuring coherence across the functions. Statutory decision-making powers over the specified functions will be vested in the CJs and therefore the leaders who make up the CJC (and possibly any other members who may be co-opted). In reality, however, to ensure accountability and political support, leaders will inevitably need to ensure their councils have considered and endorsed proposed regional plans prior to agreeing them at a CJC, as is the case currently with growth and city deals. The regulations and CJC constitutions will need to consider dispute resolution arrangements and should plan to respond to a 'worst case scenario' where there is disagreement or disengagement from one or more constituent leaders/councils.

### ***Staffing / Resources***

- 5.23 CJs will have the flexibility to agree the staffing and resourcing required and to determine the approach it takes to such matters.
- 5.24 For example a CJC will be able to employ and recruit staff in its own right; make agreements to have staff placed at the CJC's disposal; and undertake secondments (in and out) to enable CJs to discharge their functions.
- 5.25 CJs must 'appoint' a Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer and Chief Governance Officer (however, these could be provided by a constituent authority, or seconded etc).

### ***Funding***

- 5.26 CJs will be funded by their constituent councils, in proportions that they will be able to determine.
- 5.27 A CJC will be required to calculate its budget requirement, set out how that requirement is to be met and keep proper accounts. In calculating its budget requirements a CJC will be able to take into account any other funding streams it might receive. The draft regulations state the CJC members (leaders) must unanimously agree a budget and that 'constituent' councils must pay a proportionate amount. If there is a disagreement on the proportionality of funding, Ministers have powers of direction.
- 5.28 As with local authorities CJs will be required to keep proper accounting records and to prepare annual accounts in accordance with existing local government legislation.
- 5.29 The draft regulations provide outline arrangements and timescales for the determination of budgets. The proposed deadlines in the draft regulations will require further exploration to ensure that they align with council budget setting processes and timescales.

### ***Scrutiny***

- 5.30 The regulations state that CJs must set up an overview and scrutiny committee.
- 5.31 Scrutiny will be essential to ensure accountability back to authorities and wider councillors.
- 5.32 There has been some discussion amongst officials as to whether a 'sub-committee' of the CJC is an appropriate scrutiny vehicle, or whether authorities should set up a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee or individual councils should scrutinise their leader and the CJC directly.
- 5.33 Irrespective of any joint scrutiny arrangement, individual council scrutiny committees would be able to seek to scrutinise regional bodies as they do now. A balance will need to be struck however in managing multiple scrutiny demands on senior CJC staff and members across several constituent authorities' scrutiny arrangements.

### ***Timing***

- 5.34 CJs must meet for the first time by the end of September 2021. Although this would likely be an initial meeting and some bedding in of arrangements will be required.

### ***Costs***

- 5.35 The consultation document notes that the Minister would be prepared to provide set-up costs to support CJs. The accompanying Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) outlines the financial implications of 'Doing Nothing' and 'Establishing CJs'. The RIA notes that it is difficult to accurately estimate, as it depends on how ambitious CJs may wish to be and whether they would have limited core staff/overheads, perhaps

provided by an authority, or recruit their own senior staff. The RIA uses a range of sources to estimate costs, including previous RIAs for strategic planning panels, the existing programme office costs for current city and growth deals and benchmarks for senior staff.

## **6. REGULATIONS TO ESTABLISH CJCS AND CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 During the past 18 months WG have been engaging on plans for CJC's with various stakeholders, such as the WLGA Partnership Council and Executive Board, Lawyers in Local Government, the Society of Welsh Treasurers, the WLGA LA Economic Development & Regeneration Officers Network, HR Directors and the Wales Growth/City Deal regions.
- 6.2 The Draft Regulations, as described above, were published on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October. These have been issued for consultation (with a closing date of 4<sup>th</sup> January). A copy of the draft regulations (applicable to the South East Wales region) are appended at Appendix 1 to the report.
- 6.3 WG have said they welcome input to ensure the regulations are shaped by local authorities to ensure they reflect local/regional requirements. The WG consultation document relating to the regulations is appended at Appendix 2 to the report. Appendix 3 contains the specific questions WG are seeking feedback on through the consultation.
- 6.4 An additional set of 'Regulations of General Application will be issued for consultation in the New Year. It is envisaged these will cover what existing legislation and wider statutory duties might apply to CJC's, such as the sustainable development duty and Welsh Language Standards. Statutory guidance will also be produced.
- 6.5 Members therefore have the opportunity, through the consultation, to provide any feedback they have in relation to the draft regulations and CJC's more generally.
- 6.6 Members are asked to note that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee also considered the WG consultation and draft regulations at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and that feedback from that meeting would form part of the overall response to the consultation.

## **7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no equality or diversity implications aligned directly to this report. WG have however published an Integrated Impact Assessment in respect of the draft regulations which can be accessed [here](#). It is planned that CJC's would be subject to the Equality Act 2010 and Welsh Language Standards.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no financial implications aligned specifically to this report however the planned introduction of CJs will and the level of detail available in respect of these is set out in the accompanying [Regulatory Impact Assessment](#) to the regulations (referenced in para 5.35 above).

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS & LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 9.1 The relevant legislation linked to the introduction of CJs and how they would operate is set out in the body of the report.

## **10. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- 10.1 WG say in developing the CJC mechanism for local government regional collaboration there is a particular emphasis on applying the sustainable development principle. In particular, building resilience for the long-term and ensuring the proposals are grounded in collaboration and integration of objectives with local government. The proposals for regionalisation of some local authority functions reflect the ways of working as they are intended to enable local authorities to plan for the longer term and require collaboration and joint working between local authorities. The proposals also support further integration of services and pooling of often limited resources and expertise, providing a greater level of capacity and capability overall and providing space for strategic thinking and planning that has been largely squeezed out in individual local authorities.
- 10.2 In addition to ensuring the sustainable development principle and five ways of working underpin its approach and they have also considered how a regional approach can maximise our contribution to the well-being goals. In doing so they say CJs put in place a new framework to enable local government to make their contribution to the goals more effectively. This means the direct contribution of CJs to achieving the goals is limited, but the indirect contribution will be much more significant.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 CJs will have functions that cover economic well-being, strategic planning (LDPs will remain with LAs) and transport. WG hope they act as the catalyst to the development and implementation of collaborative arrangements across local government,
- 11.2 WG have published draft regulations which would establish the South East Wales CJC and set out how the CJC would operate. They have initiated a consultation on those regulations which ends on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021.
- 11.3 WG have said they welcome input to ensure the regulations are shaped by local authorities to ensure they reflect local/regional requirements. Members therefore have the opportunity, through the consultation, to

provide any feedback they have in relation to the draft regulations and CJs more generally.

**Other Information:-**

**Relevant Scrutiny Committee** – Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**18<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

**ITEM: WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION: DRAFT REGULATIONS TO  
ESTABLISH CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEES**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, DIRECTOR OF LEGAL  
SERVICES AND SERVICE DIRECTOR - DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND  
COMMUNICATIONS IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE LEADER AND DEPUTY  
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**Background Papers**

Freestanding Report.



**2021 No. (W. )**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT,  
WALES**

**The South East Wales Corporate  
Joint Committee Regulations 2021**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

Part 5 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 enables the Welsh Ministers, by regulations to establish Corporate Joint Committees. These regulations establish the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee, and the following functions will be exercised by this body:

- (1) economic well-being function,
- (2) strategic development planning function, and
- (3) developing transport policies.

There are 5 Parts to these Regulations.

Part 1 establishes the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee, and its area.

Part 2 introduces Schedule 1 to the Regulations. This Schedule contains the constitutional arrangements for the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee.

Part 3 sets out the membership of the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee. In accordance with this Part, the body will comprise 10 council members, a member from the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, and may include co-opted members with or without voting rights.

Part 4 identifies the functions that will be exercised by the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee. This Part also introduces Schedule 2 to the Regulations which contains further detail about the function of developing transport policies.

Part 5 identifies how the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee is to be funded.

**2021 No. (W.)**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT,  
WALES**

**The South East Wales Corporate  
Joint Committee Regulations 2021**

<i>Made</i>	***
<i>Laid before Senedd Cymru</i>	***
<i>Coming into force</i>	***

The Welsh Ministers make these Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by Part 5 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

The requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (relating to consultation conditions) have been satisfied.

**Title and commencement**

**1.** The title of these Regulations is the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021, and they come into force on \*\*\*.

**Interpretation**

**2.** In these Regulations—

“the Brecon Beacons member” (“*aelod Bannau Brycheiniog*”) has the meaning given by regulation 7(1);

“CJC area” (“*ardal CBC*”) has the meaning given by regulation 4;

“constituent council” (“*cyngor cyfansoddiadol*”) means—

- (a) Cardiff county council;
- (b) Monmouthshire county council;
- (c) Blaenau Gwent county borough council;
- (d) Bridgend county borough council;
- (e) Caerphilly county borough council;

- (f) Merthyr Tydfil county borough council;
- (g) Newport county borough council;
- (h) Rhondda, Cynon, Taff county borough council;
- (i) Torfaen county borough council;
- (j) The Vale of Glamorgan county borough council.

“co-opted member” (“*aelod cyfetholedig*”) has the meaning given by regulation 8(2);

“council member” (“*aelod cyngor*”) has the meaning given by regulation 6(2);

“executive officer” (“*swyddog gweithredol*”) has the meaning given by paragraph 5 of Schedule 1;

“member” (“*aelod*”) means—

- (a) a council member;
- (b) the Brecon Beacons member;
- (c) a co-opted member;

“National Park Authority” (“*Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol*”) means an authority in Wales established under section 63 of the Environment Act 1995(1);

“senior executive member” (“*prif aelod gweithrediaeth*”) means—

- (a) in the case of a constituent council operating a leader and cabinet executive, the executive leader;
- (b) in the case of a constituent council operating a mayor and cabinet executive, the elected mayor;

“standing orders” (“*rheolau sefydlog*”) means the standing orders made under paragraph 10 of Schedule 1;

“strategic planning functions” (“*swyddogaethau cynllunio strategol*”) means—

- (a) the functions of the South East Wales CJC under Part 6 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004(2) (see regulation 11), and
- (b) any functions incidental or conducive to the exercise of those functions;

“voting member” (“*aelod â phleidlais*”), in relation to any question to be decided by the South East Wales CJC, means—

- (a) a council member;
- (b) where the question relates to the exercise of strategic planning functions, the Brecon Beacons member;

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(1) 1995 c.25

(2) 2004 c.5

- (c) a co-opted member entitled to vote on the question by virtue of regulation 8(6).

## PART 1

### Establishment and area

#### **Establishment**

**3.**—(1) There is established a body corporate to be known as the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (“the South East Wales CJC”).

(2) The South East Wales CJC has the functions—

- (a) conferred on it by these Regulations, and
- (b) conferred or imposed on it, or delegated to it, by any other enactment (whenever passed or made).

#### **Area**

**4.** The South East Wales CJC area comprises the areas of the constituent councils.

## PART 2

### Constitution

#### **Constitution**

**5.** Schedule 1 makes provision about the constitution of the South East Wales CJC.

## PART 3

### Membership

#### **Membership and council members**

**6.**—(1) The members of the South East Wales CJC are—

- (a) the 10 council members,
- (b) the Brecon Beacons member (but see regulation 7), and
- (c) any co-opted members (see regulation 8).

(2) The senior executive member of each constituent council is a council member.

(3) A person ceases to be a council member of the South East Wales CJC if the person ceases to be the senior executive member of a constituent council.

(4) Where there is a vacancy in the office of senior executive member of a constituent council, the

constituent council must appoint a member of the constituent council to act as council member of the South East Wales CJC until such time as the vacancy is filled.

### **Brecon Beacons member**

7.—(1) The Brecon Beacons member must be appointed by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (“the Authority”).

(2) The Authority may only appoint as Brecon Beacons member—

- (a) the chairman of the Authority,
- (b) the deputy chairman of the Authority, or
- (c) the chairperson of a committee with responsibility for planning matters as may be established by Authority.

(3) But the Brecon Beacons member is a member of the South East Wales CJC only in relation to the exercise of strategic planning functions.

(4) The Brecon Beacons member ceases to be the Brecon Beacons member if that person ceases to hold an office mentioned paragraph (2).

### **Co-opted members**

8.—(1) The council members may appoint other members to the South East Wales CJC.

(2) In these Regulations, a member appointed under paragraph (1) is referred to as a “co-opted member”.

(3) In any question to be decided by the South East Wales CJC, the number of votes which may be cast by co-opted members may not exceed—

- (a) the number of votes which may be cast by council members, or
- (b) where the question relates to the exercise of strategic planning functions, the number of votes which may be cast by council members and the Brecon Beacons member.

(4) A co-opted member is appointed—

- (a) for a period determined by the council members, or
- (b) if no period is determined, until the appointment is terminated by the council members.

(5) Where a period is determined under paragraph 8(4)(a), the co-opted member’s appointment may nevertheless be terminated by the council members before the end of the period.

(6) The council members, when appointing a co-opted member—

- (a) must determine whether the co-opted member may vote at meetings of the South East Wales CJC, and
- (b) may determine that a co-opted member is permitted to vote only in relation to such matters as the council members may specify.

## PART 4

### Functions

#### **Economic well-being**

**9.** The economic well-being function is granted to the South East Wales CJC (see Part 5(1) of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021).

#### **Transfer etc. of function of developing transport policies**

**10.**—(1) The function of developing policies under section 108(1)(a) and (2A)(a) of Part 2 of the Transport Act 2000(2) (“the 2000 Act”) is, in respect of the area of each constituent council, to be exercised by the South East Wales CJC, and not by the constituent councils.

(2) The 2000 Act applies in relation to the South East Wales CJC and its constituent councils subject to the modifications in Schedule [2].

(3) The Regional Transport Planning (Wales) Order 2014(3) is revoked.

#### **Strategic planning functions**

**11.** The South East Wales CJC has the function of preparing a strategic development plan (and accordingly Part 6 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 applies to the South East Wales CJC (see in particular sections 60K to 60N of that Act).

#### **Subsidiary powers**

**12.**—(1) The South East Wales CJC may do anything—

- (a) to facilitate, or
- (b) which is incidental or conducive to,

the exercise of its functions.

(2) Things which may be done under paragraph (1) include—

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(1) This will be updated to reflect the relevant section.  
(2) 2000 c.38.  
(3) 2014 No. 2178 (W. 212)

- (a) incurring expenditure;
  - (b) charging fees;
  - (c) acquiring or disposing of property or rights.
- (3) But the South East Wales CJC may not borrow money.

## PART 4

### Funding

#### Calculation of budget

**13.**—(1) In relation to each financial year the South East Wales CJC must calculate the aggregate of—

- (a) the expenditure which the CJC estimates it will incur in respect of the financial year in the exercise of its functions (including expenditure on administration and other overheads);
- (b) the amount which the CJC considers appropriate to raise for contingencies arising in respect of the financial year;
- (c) the amount which the CJC considers appropriate to be held as a reserve to meet expenditure it considers will be incurred in respect of future financial years;
- (d) any amount which the CJC considers is necessary to meet liabilities outstanding in respect of any earlier financial year.

(2) In relation to each financial year, the South East Wales CJC must also calculate the aggregate of amounts it estimates it will receive from sources other than the constituent councils and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.

(3) In relation to a financial year, where the amount calculated under paragraph (1) exceeds the amount calculated under paragraph (2), the amount of excess is the South East Wales CJC's budget requirement for the financial year.

(4) The South East Wales CJC must calculate its budget requirement—

- (a) in relation to its first financial year within two months following the first annual general meeting ;
- (b) in relation to each subsequent financial year, no later than 14 February in the preceding financial year.

(5) The South East Wales CJC may revise its budget requirement.

## **Funding of budget requirement**

**14.**—(1) The South East Wales CJC must determine the amount of its budget requirement for a financial year attributable to functions other than strategic planning functions (including an appropriate proportion of administration costs and other overheads).

(2) The amount determined under paragraph (1) must be paid to the South East Wales CJC by the constituent councils, and the proportion of that amount payable by each constituent council is to be determined by the unanimous agreement of the council members.

(3) The South East Wales CJC must determine the amount of its budget requirement for a financial year attributable to strategic planning functions (including an appropriate proportion of administration costs and other overheads).

(4) The amount determined under paragraph (2) must be paid to the South East Wales CJC by the constituent councils and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, and the proportion of that amount payable by each constituent council and by the Authority is to be determined by the unanimous agreement of the council members and the Brecon Beacons member.

(5) Where agreement cannot be reached as to the proportions payable under paragraphs (2) or (4), the Welsh Ministers may by direction specify the proportion payable by each constituent or each constituent council and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, as the case may be.

## **Accounts**

**15.**—(1) The South East Wales CJC must—

- (a) keep proper accounting records, and
- (b) prepare accounts in respect of each financial year in accordance with directions given by the Welsh Ministers.

(2) The directions which the Welsh Ministers may give include directions as to—

- (a) the information to be contained in the accounts and the manner in which the accounts are to be presented;
- (b) the methods and principles in accordance with which the accounts are to be prepared;
- (c) additional information that is to accompany the accounts.

*Name*

Title of Minister, one of the Welsh Ministers

Date





## SCHEDULE 1 Ref

### Constitution

#### **Chairperson**

1.—(1) The South East Wales CJC must appoint a chairperson and vice-chairperson from among its council members.

(2) The appointment of a chairperson and vice-chairperson is to be the first business transacted at the first annual general meeting of the South East Wales CJC.

(3) The South East Wales CJC must, at each annual general meeting—

- (a) confirm the continuing appointment of the chairperson and vice-chairperson, or
- (b) appoint a new chairperson, vice-chairperson or both from among its council members.

(4) A person ceases to be chairperson or vice-chairperson if the person ceases to be a council member of the South East Wales CJC.

(5) A person appointed as chairperson or vice-chairperson may at any time resign that office by notice in writing given to the other members.

(6) If a vacancy arises in the office of chairperson or vice chairperson, an appointment to fill the vacancy must be made at the first meeting of the South East Wales CJC held after the vacancy has arisen.

(7) If the office of chairperson is vacant, the vice-chairperson may carry out the functions of chairperson until the vacancy is filled.

#### **No remuneration payable to members**

2. No remuneration is to be payable by the South East Wales CJC to its members.

#### **Staff**

3.—(1) The South East Wales CJC may make such arrangements for staffing as it considers appropriate (but see paragraphs 4 and 5).

(2) Where the South East Wales CJC appoints staff under sub-paragraph (1), they are to be appointed on terms and conditions (including conditions as to remuneration) substantially similar to the terms and conditions of officers within a constituent council undertaking reasonably comparable responsibilities as the South East Wales CJC may determine.

(3) The South East Wales CJC may enter into an agreement with—

- (a) another corporate joint committee (within the meaning given by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021);
- (b) another devolved Welsh authority (within the meaning given by the Government of Wales Act 2006(1)),

for the placing of staff of the South East Wales CJC at the disposal of the other committee or the authority for the purposes of that committee or authority's functions, on such terms as may be provided by the agreement.

(4) A devolved Welsh authority (within the meaning given by the Government of Wales Act 2006) may enter into an agreement with the South East Wales CJC for the placing of staff of the authority at the disposal of the South East Wales CJC for the purposes of its functions, on such terms as may be provided by the agreement.

(5) No agreement may be entered into under subparagraph (3) or (4) unless every member of staff to whom it relates has been consulted.

(6) Where a member of staff of the South East Wales CJC is placed at the disposal of another devolved Welsh authority by virtue of an agreement under subparagraph (3)—

- (a) for superannuation purposes, service rendered by the member of staff is service rendered to the South East Wales CJC, and
- (b) for the purposes of any enactment relating to the exercise of the other devolved Welsh authority's functions, the member of staff is to be treated as a member of staff of that authority.

(7) Where a member of staff of a devolved Welsh authority is placed at the disposal of the South East Wales CJC by virtue of an agreement under subparagraph (4), for the purposes of these Regulations and any other enactment relating to the exercise of the South East Wales CJC's functions, the member of staff is to be treated as a member of staff of the South East Wales CJC.

#### **Transfer of staff**

4. Where a member of staff appointed by the South East Wales CJC has been transferred to the CJC from a constituent council, the provisions of the Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006(2) other than regulations 4(6) and 10 apply to the transfer, whether or not it is a relevant transfer for the purposes of those regulations.

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(1) 2006 c.32  
(2) S.I. 2006/246

## **Executive officers**

**5.**—(1) The South East Wales CJC must appoint—

- (a) a Chief Executive,
- (b) a Monitoring Officer,
- (c) a Chief Financial Officer,
- (d) a Chief Governance Officer,

(referred to collectively in these Regulations as “executive officers”).

(2) For further provision about the officers mentioned in sub-paragraph (1) see the [Corporate Joint Committees (General Provisions) (Wales) Regulations 2021].

## **Proceedings and voting**

**6.**—(1) No business is to be transacted at a meeting of the South East Wales CJC unless—

- (a) the chairperson attends the meeting, and
- (b) no fewer than 70% of the voting members attend.

(2) In any question to be decided by the South East Wales CJC, other than a decision as to the proportion payable under regulation 14(2) or (4), each voting member has one vote and the question is to be decided by simple majority.

(3) If a vote is tied the matter is not carried (subject to sub-paragraph (4)).

(4) If a vote is tied on any question relating to the exercise of strategic planning functions the chairperson has the casting vote.

(5) The voting procedure set out in this paragraph may be substituted by an alternative procedure if every voting member agrees.

(6) An agreement to substitute an alternative voting procedure may apply to—

- (a) every vote of the South East Wales CJC, or
- (b) votes on such questions as may be specified in the agreement.

(7) Where an alternative voting procedure is to be agreed in relation to every vote of the South East Wales CJC, the reference in sub-paragraph (5) to “every voting member” includes each co-opted member entitled to vote on any question by virtue of regulation 8(6).

(8) Where an alternative voting procedure is to be agreed in relation to votes on such questions as are specified in the agreement, the reference in sub-paragraph (5) to “every voting member” includes only those co-opted members as are entitled to vote on the specified questions.

(9) Where an alternative voting procedure is to be agreed in relation to—

- (a) every vote of the South East Wales CJC, or
- (b) a vote on a question concerning strategic planning functions,

the reference in sub-paragraph (5) to “every voting member” includes the Brecon Beacons member.

(10) Where an alternative voting procedure is agreed, it must be set out in the standing orders.

### **Meetings**

**7.**—(1) The South East Wales CJC must hold an annual general meeting in each financial year on a date determined by the CJC.

(2) But the annual general meeting held in the first financial year must be held before the end of September 2021.

(3) The annual general meeting held in the first financial year is to be presided at by the council member for Blaenau Gwent county borough council until the chairperson is appointed (and accordingly the chairperson is to preside at the remainder of the meeting).

(4) The South East Wales CJC may hold other meetings on dates determined by the CJC.

(5) An extraordinary meeting of the South East Wales CJC may be called at any time by a voting member (including any co-opted member entitled to vote on any question by virtue of regulation 8(6)).

(6) The chairperson (or vice-chairperson if the chairperson is not present) must preside at any meeting of the South East Wales CJC.

### **Financial years**

**8.**—(1) The first financial year of the South East Wales CJC is the period beginning with [date regs come into force] and ending with 31 March 2022.

### **Sub-committees**

**9.**—(1) The South East Wales CJC may establish sub-committees.

(2) A sub-committee may exercise, on behalf of the South East Wales CJC, only those functions as are determined by the South East Wales CJC (but see paragraphs 12 and 13).

(3) The South East Wales CJC must specify the membership and procedures of any sub-committee.

(4) The South East Wales CJC may appoint persons who are not members of the CJC to a sub-committee

and a sub-committee need not include any members of the CJC (subject to sub-paragraph (5)).

(5) Where a sub-committee exercises strategic planning functions the Brecon Beacons member must be a member of the sub-committee.

(6) The procedures of a sub-committee must be set out in the standing orders.

### **Standing Orders**

**10.**—(1) The South East Wales CJC must make standing orders for the regulation of its proceedings and business so far as not regulated by these Regulations or any other enactment (whenever passed or made).

(2) The standing orders may be varied or revoked and replaced.

### **Code of conduct**

**11.** The South East Wales CJC must establish a code of conduct as regards the conduct of its members and its members of staff (including the executive officers), and may vary, revoke or replace such a code.

### **Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

**12.**—(1) The South East Wales CJC must establish a sub-committee (known as the overview and scrutiny sub-committee) to—

- (a) review and or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any of the South East Wales CJC's functions;
- (b) make reports or recommendations to the South East Wales CJC or its executive officers with respect to the discharge of any of those functions;
- (c) make reports or recommendations to the South East Wales CJC or its executive officers on matters which affect the corporate joint committee's area or the inhabitants of that area;
- (d) exercise such other functions and the South East Wales CJC may determine.

(2) The standing orders must include provision regulating the manner in which the overview and scrutiny sub-committee exercises its functions.

### **Governance and Audit Sub-Committee**

**13.**—(1) The South East Wales CJC must establish a sub-committee (known as the governance and audit sub-committee) to—

- (a) review and scrutinise the South East Wales CJC's financial affairs;
- (b) make reports and recommendations in relation to the South East Wales CJC's financial affairs;
- (c) review and assess the risk management, internal control and corporate governance arrangements of the South East Wales CJC;
- (d) make reports and recommendations to the South East Wales CJC or its executive officers on the adequacy and effectiveness of those arrangements;
- (e) oversee the South East Wales CJC's internal and external audit arrangements;
- (f) review any financial statements prepared by the South East Wales CJC;
- (g) exercise such other functions and the South East Wales CJC may specify.

(2) The standing orders must include provision regulating the manner in which the governance and audit sub-committee exercises its functions.

## SCHEDULE 2 Ref

### Modification of Transport Act 2000

1. Part 2 of the 2000 Act applies in relation to the South East Wales CJC and its constituent councils with the following modifications.

2. Section 108 (local transport plans) is to be read as if—

- (a) for subsection (1) there were substituted—
 

“(1) The South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (“the South East Wales CJC”) must develop policies, to be implemented under subsection (1A), for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within its area.”;
- (b) after subsection (1) there were inserted—
 

“(1A) Each local transport authority in Wales whose area falls within the area of the South East Wales CJC must carry out their functions so as to implement the policies developed under subsection (1).”;
- (c) for subsection (2A) there were substituted—
 

“(2A) The South East Wales CJC must also develop policies for the implementation by the local transport authorities in its area of the Wales Transport Strategy.”;
- (d) after subsection (2A) there were inserted—

“(2B) Each local transport authority in Wales whose area falls within the area of the South East Wales CJC must carry out their functions so as to implement the policies developed under subsection (2A).”;

- (e) for subsection (3A) there were substituted—

“(3A) The South East Wales CJC must prepare a document to be known as the regional transport plan containing its policies under subsections (1) and (2A).”;
- (f) for subsection (5) there were substituted—

“(5) In this Part “regional transport policies”, in relation to the South East Wales CJC, means policies developed under subsection (1).”
- (g) after subsection (5) there were inserted—

“(6) In this Part, references to the area of the South East Wales CJC are to be interpreted in accordance with [regulation 4] of the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021.”;
- (h) the heading of the section were “Local and Regional Transport Plans”.

3. Section 109A is to be read as follows—

**“109A Approval of regional plan**

(1) The South East Wales CJC must submit its regional transport plan to the Welsh Ministers for their approval.

(2) If the Welsh Ministers refuse to approve the plan—

- (a) they must give the South East Wales CJC a statement of their reasons for its refusal, and
- (b) the South East Wales CJC must prepare another regional transport plan and submit the plan to the Welsh Ministers for their approval.

(3) If the Welsh Ministers approve a plan under this section, the plan has effect when the approval is given.

(4) The Welsh Ministers may approve a regional transport plan under this section if (but only if) they consider—

- (a) that the plan is consistent with the Wales Transport Strategy, and
- (b) that the policies contained in the plan are adequate for the implementation in the South East Wales CJC’s area of the Strategy.”

4. Section 109B is to be read as follows—



**“109B Further provision about the regional plan**

(1) The South East Wales CJC must keep its regional transport plan under review and alter it if it considers it appropriate to do so.

(2) The South East Wales CJC must in particular review the plan as soon as practicable after the publication of the Wales Transport Strategy or any revision of it.

(3) The South East Wales CJC must replace its regional transport plan not later than five years after the date on which the plan was approved under section 109A.

(4) Section 109A applies to a replacement plan as altered as it applies to a plan as originally prepared.

(5) The South East Wales CJC shall be taken to have complied with subsection (3) if (but only if)—

- (a) it submits its replacement plan to the Welsh Ministers for their approval under section 109A before the end of the five year period mentioned in subsection (3), and
- (b) the Welsh Ministers approve the plan under section 109A (whether the approval is given before or after the end of that five year period).

(6) If the South East Wales CJC fails to comply with subsection (3) because it fails to submit its replacement plan to the Welsh Ministers before the end of the five year period mentioned in that subsection, the South East Wales CJC must replace its regional transport plan as soon as practicable after the expiry of the five year period.

(7) If the South East Wales CJC fails to comply with subsection (3) because the Welsh Ministers refuse to approve a plan submitted to them under section 109A, it must replace its regional transport plan as soon as practicable after the refusal.

(8) As soon as practicable after its plan, or its plan as altered, has been approved under section 109A, the South East Wales CJC must—

- (a) publish the plan or the plan as altered in such manner as it thinks fit, and
- (b) send a copy of it to such persons (if any) as may be specified in guidance under section 112(1).

(9) The South East Wales CJC must also—

- (a) ensure that a copy of its regional transport plan is available for

inspection (at all reasonable hours) at such places it thinks fit,

- (b) give notice, by such means as it thinks expedient for bringing it to the attention of the public, as to the places at which a copy of it may be inspected, and
- (c) supply a copy of it (or any part of it) to any person on request, either free of charge or at a charge representing no more than the cost of providing the copy.”

5. Section 109C is to be treated as if it were omitted.

6. Section 112 is to be read as follows—

**“112 Regional plan: supplementary**

(1) In carrying out its functions under sections 108 to 109B, the South East Wales CJC must have regard to any guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers concerning—

- (a) the content of the regional transport plan,
- (b) the preparation of such plans,
- (c) the alteration and replacement of such plans, and
- (d) the publication and making available of such plans as originally made and as altered or replaced.

(2) Subsection (3) applies in relation to the development of policies under section 108(1) and the implementation under section 108(1A) of those policies.

(3) The South East Wales CJC, or a local transport authority within the area of the CJC (as the case may be), must have regard to the transport needs of disabled persons (within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010) and of persons who are elderly or who have mobility problems.”

7. Section 113A is to be treated as if it were omitted.

8. Section 113B is to be read as follows—

**“113B Directions concerning regional plan**

(1) The Welsh Ministers may give general or specific directions to the South East Wales CJC as to the manner in which it is to carry out its functions under sections 108 to 109B.

(2) The Welsh Ministers may give general or specific directions to a local transport authority whose area falls within the area of the South

East Wales CJC as to the manner in which they are to carry out their functions under section 108.

(3) Directions given under subsection (1) may include in particular directions as to the timetable in accordance with which the regional transport plan or alterations to the plan must be prepared.

(4) Directions given under subsection (2) may include in particular directions as to—

- (a) the action required to be taken to implement the policies contained in the regional transport plan;
- (b) as to the steps required to be taken to remove the effects of action which is incompatible with those policies.

(5) Directions under this section—

- (a) must be in writing;
- (b) may be varied or revoked by further directions under this section.

(6) The Welsh Ministers must consult—

- (a) in relation to a direction under subsection (1), the South East Wales CJC,
- (b) in relation to a direction under subsection (2), the local transport authority concerned,

before giving, varying or revoking the direction.

(7) The Welsh Ministers may consult any other persons they consider appropriate in relation to giving, varying or revoking a direction under subsection (1) or (2).”

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**Number: WG41255**



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Welsh Government  
**Consultation Document**

## Regulations to establish Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs)

Date of issue: 12 October 2020  
Action required: Responses by 4 January 2021

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.  
This document is also available in Welsh.

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<b>Overview</b>	Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) are being proposed to be established by regulation to exercise a number of principal council functions. We would like your views on the detail of the regulations to establish the CJCs.
<b>How to respond</b>	This is a written, electronic consultation. Questions can be found at appropriate points within each section and also at the end of this consultation document. You are welcome to choose how you respond, you can: complete the online form; download the form and complete manually and post to us at the address provided; or send via email.
<b>Further information and related documents</b>	Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.
<b>Contact details</b>	For further information, please contact:  Local Government Transformation & Partnerships Division Local Government Directorate Welsh Government Cathays Park Cardiff CF10 3NQ e-mail: <a href="mailto:LGPartnerships@gov.wales">LGPartnerships@gov.wales</a>
<b>Also available in Welsh at:</b>	This consultation document can be accessed from the <a href="#">Welsh Government's website</a>

## General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The Welsh Government will be data controller for any personal data you provide as part of your response to the consultation. The Welsh Ministers have statutory powers they will rely on to process this personal data which will enable them to make informed decisions about how they exercise their public functions. Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about or planning future consultations. Where the Welsh Government undertakes further analysis of consultation responses then this work may be commissioned to be carried out by an accredited third party (e.g. a research organisation or a consultancy company). Any such work will only be undertaken under contract. The Welsh Government's standard terms and conditions for such contracts set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data.

In order to show that the consultation was carried out properly, the Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then redact them before publishing.

You should also be aware of our responsibilities under Freedom of Information legislation.

If your details are published as part of the consultation response then these published reports will be retained indefinitely. Any of your data held otherwise by the Welsh Government will be kept for no more than three years.

### Your rights

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data held about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer:  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
CARDIFF  
CF10 3NQ  
[Data.ProtectionOfficer@gov.wales](mailto:Data.ProtectionOfficer@gov.wales)

The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are:

Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Tel: 01625 545 745 or  
0303 123 1113  
[ICO Website](http://ico.org.uk)

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## Foreword by the Minister for Housing and Local Government

Our world, post Covid-19, will be different. The pandemic has compelled public services and all levels of government in Wales to do things differently. Although the Covid-19 pandemic has been devastating and harmful in so many ways, there has been a tremendous amount of innovation, creativity and flexibility shown by the public sector, including local authorities and volunteers throughout Wales which we would like to build upon.

Collaboration has been a key feature of the Covid-19 response and it will also be key to our recovery.

As part of this approach I wish to bring more coherence to, and strip out some of the complexity of, regional governance arrangements - strengthening local democratic accountability by ensuring that it is local elected members making decisions together about local government services, for the benefit of their citizens and communities.

These regulations will establish Corporate Joint Committees, as provided for in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill currently before the Senedd.

The model of Corporate Joint Committees builds on the best that has already been achieved in the development of regional arrangements in different parts of Wales. It learns from experience elsewhere in the UK and in the wider world. I am determined to protect and develop the ability of local authorities to engage with local communities and work as locally as possible. We have learned from experience that our ability to act locally is best defended when local action can be complemented by regional action where the nature of the service demands this and where scarce resources need to be shared.

We need to ensure that we have consistent, resilient and accountable regional arrangements for the delivery of strategic land use planning, strategic transport planning and economic development. We were working with our partners in local government to enable this approach before the Covid-19 pandemic struck, but it is now all the more important as we seek ways to help Wales recover.

Collaboration is not new to local government, principal councils have been collaborating effectively in a range of areas for a long time. Several of these collaborations will be easily accommodated by the Corporate Joint Committees. Others require a less consistent approach across Wales and will continue to use existing governance arrangements.

Establishing Corporate Joint Committees through these regulations will provide more coherence and less complexity in the approach to regional governance arrangements in exercising the three functions proposed. Corporate Joint Committees offer opportunities to streamline existing collaboration arrangements, and provide the clarity and consistency I know principal councils have been seeking. The aim is to reduce complexity and duplication of effort and resource. I hope the establishment of these four Corporate Joint Committees will also provide the catalyst to the development and implementation of collaborative arrangements across local government, where regional planning and delivery makes sense, using them as a means of maximising outcomes for the people of Wales by maintaining local

democratic accountability, reducing complexity and making the best use of resources.

Local government Leaders and officers have been engaged throughout the development of the Corporate Joint Committee proposals and these regulations and I have welcomed and valued their input. I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks for the constructive engagement which has shaped both the Bill and these regulations. I am committed to continuing to work with local government on implementing and further developing CJsCs and look forward to receiving thoughts and views through this consultation process so we can make sure we get this right.

**Julie James MS**  
**Minister for Housing and Local Government**

## **SECTION ONE – Introduction**

### **What are Corporate Joint Committees?**

In contrast to other joint committee structures which exist in statute, Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) will be separate corporate bodies which can employ staff, hold assets and budgets, and undertake functions. A CJC when established will have specific functions vested in them.

CJCs will provide a more consistent approach by local government for strategic regional governance, planning and service delivery; offering a mechanism in which principal councils can work collaboratively and at scale to plan and deliver the key strategic functions that will be needed to respond to and recover from the recent Covid 19 pandemic. CJCs will build on the new behaviours, commitments and collaboration that has occurred during this time helping further develop and lock in the transformation of organisational working. CJCs will help to align the individual front line community based service delivery with the collaborative and strategic actions required at a regional scale to drive recovery, to re-build and to re-invest in modern local economies.

### **Background**

The Minister for Housing and Local Government began discussing the concept of CJCs with local government Leaders through the Working Group on Local Government<sup>1</sup> (the Working Group) in early 2019. This Working Group had been established following the consultation on the Green Paper Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People<sup>2</sup> in 2018. The objective of the Working Group was to develop a sustainable future for local government and local services without recourse to the comprehensive mergers of principal councils which had been indicated in the Green Paper and opposed by local government.

As part of this, the Working Group reviewed existing regional working arrangements in local government and the appetite and priorities for increased future collaboration.

In June 2019, the Minister for Housing and Local Government published the recommendations of the Working Group<sup>3</sup>. The recommendations covered a number of areas including shared services, voluntary mergers, powers and flexibilities, diversity in local government, and the mutual respect agenda.

One of the key recommendations was related to the joint desire to create a consistent mechanism for regional working which would retain local democratic accountability; consistency of delivery; and simplification of collaborative arrangements:

Working Group on Local Government - Recommendation 3: That Welsh Ministers should include provisions within the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill for a consistent mechanism for regional working.

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<sup>1</sup> The Working Group on Local Government was created to develop a shared agenda for reform to ensure the sustainability of local service provision through appropriate structures and processes within the framework of democratic accountability

<sup>2</sup> [Consultation Outcome - Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Working Group on Local Government Recommendations](#)

In order to ensure the delivery of this recommendation, a Local Government Sub Group of the Partnership Council for Wales<sup>4</sup> was established to provide the necessary leadership and oversight for this work.

### **Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill**

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill (the Bill) introduced into the Senedd in November 2019 included (in Part 5), as a response to the recommendations of the Working Group, provisions to create via regulations a vehicle for consistent regional collaboration between principal councils - CJsCs. The provisions also enable the constituent principal councils to invite participation by partners from other sectors in the work of CJsCs through a process of co-opted membership.

The constitutional and governance arrangements as well as the functions of the CJC will be set out in the regulations establishing them. The Bill sets out what the regulations will provide for to enable the effective establishment of CJsCs. However, the Bill does not detail the specific functions of a CJC or how it will be governed. This is all done via the regulations.

Part 5 of the Bill provides for the establishment, through regulations, of CJsCs by two routes:

- at the instigation of two or more principal councils. Two or more principal councils can request that the Welsh Ministers make regulations establishing a CJC for their areas in relation to any of the functions they exercise. The Bill sets out how this to be done and any conditions necessary.
- at the instigation of Welsh Ministers. The Welsh Ministers can establish a CJC to exercise functions without a request from principal councils, but only in relation to certain functions or functional areas which are specified on the face of the Bill.

This consultation is in relation to the establishment of CJsCs through the second route, that is, at the instigation of Welsh Ministers, in relation to the functions set out in Section 6. The consultation seeks views on the draft regulations – hereafter referred to as the Establishment Regulations.

The Minister for Housing and Local Government has confirmed her intention to bring forward regulations to establish the first CJsCs – that is one for each of the four regions described in Section Two below – by April 2021. The Bill provides that there must be consultation before Establishment Regulations can be made and that consultation can take place before commencement of the Bill. This formal consultation process therefore is taking place alongside the passage of the Bill through the Senedd and will be subject to that process.

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<sup>4</sup> The Local Government Sub Group of the Partnership Council was created to take forward a programme of work based on recommendations of the Working Group on Local Government and other issues related to local government reform

## **This consultation**

This consultation is seeking your views on the draft Establishment Regulations which will create four regional CJsCs across Wales to exercise functions relating to strategic development planning and regional transport planning; they will also be able to do things to promote the economic well-being of their areas.

The aim is to ensure these Establishment Regulations provide for the core aspects of the establishment and operation of the four CJsCs, and are flexible enough to respond to the specific circumstances in each area. It is, therefore, important to recognise that the detail of implementation could differ between CJsCs.

Once established, and where the constituent principal councils wishes them to, these CJsCs would be able to exercise other functions in the future. It is important therefore that these Establishment Regulations provide the appropriate foundations to support this. Any future transfer of functions would be subject to further consultation and any necessary legislation at that time.

It is important to note for the purpose of this consultation that while there are four separate sets of Establishment Regulations, one for each CJC, the content of each separate set of regulations are substantially the same and we are therefore consulting on those regulations as one. Any reference to the Establishment Regulations, unless expressed otherwise, is a reference to all four draft sets of regulations. Similarly the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) and the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) in Section 9 which accompany the regulations have been drafted as single documents relating to all four sets of Establishment Regulations.

Alongside the Establishment Regulations for each CJC there will be a set of regulations that will apply generally to all the CJsCs, setting out the detail of their governance and administrative arrangements and the legislative framework within which they will operate. Such regulations will be necessary to support the implementation of the Establishment Regulations. In this consultation paper where necessary these will be referred to as 'Regulations of General Application'. It is our intention to continue to work with local government on the content of the Regulations of General Application.

While these Regulations of General Application are not subject to this consultation, in order to put the Establishment Regulations in context, we have sought to indicate throughout what we think might be provided for within those Regulations of General Application, subject to the outcome of this consultation. This is not however intended to be a definitive or exhaustive description of the Regulations of General Application.

## **SECTION TWO – Approach to developing the regulations**

### **Principles applied**

Two key principles underpin the development of the Establishment Regulations for CJs:

- A CJC should be treated as a member of the ‘local government family’ and, where appropriate, should largely be subject to the same powers and duties as principal councils in the way that they operate. The intent is to avoid as far as possible making CJs do things in a manner that those in local government would be unfamiliar with or to create new and unfamiliar procedures, obligations, powers etc. which might increase administrative burdens
- The detail on how a CJC operates in practice should be left to the determination of the members of the CJC itself. This flexibility will enable the CJs to differ between geographical areas to meet the different needs and ambitions of their region.

### **Consultation Question One:**

**a) What are your views on CJs being subject to broadly the same powers and duties as principal councils?**

**b) Do you agree that CJs should have broadly the same governance and administrative framework as a principal council provided that this is proportionate? Please give your reasons.**

**c) Do you agree that members of CJs should have appropriate discretion on the detail of constitutional and operational arrangements? Please give your reasons.**

### **Stakeholder engagement and co-production**

The Minister for Housing and Local Government has held extensive discussions on the CJC proposals with local government Leaders, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and with wider public service stakeholders who will be impacted by the development of CJs. This co-development of the Establishment Regulations, and any accompanying Regulations of General Application, is aimed at ensuring they are fit for purpose and deliver on the intended outcomes of simplification and consistency of governance structures.

The mechanisms used for political engagement have included:

- The Working Group on Local Government
- The Partnership Council for Wales
- Local Government Sub Group of Partnership Council
- WLGA events including WLGA Executive Board, WLGA Council meetings, regular scheduled Ministerial meetings with the WLGA and meetings with a number of the WLGA political group Leaders
- Individual meetings with principal council Leaders
- Principal council Leaders in regional groupings

The Minister and officials have also engaged with Chief Executives via the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE).

In addition to political and Chief Executive engagement, there has also been joint working between officials to co-develop the detail which has informed these regulations. Such engagement has been forthcoming and welcomed by both Welsh Government and local government to ensure that the regulations meet the needs of principal councils, add value and do not unintentionally cut across other arrangements.

The Lawyers in Local Government Group (LLG) has been actively engaged on co-development of regulations relating to governance, audit, standards and scrutiny issues of CJs.

The Society of Welsh Treasurers (SWT) has been equally involved in considering detail of finance and funding regimes for CJs.

Local government and WLGA officers have also worked alongside Welsh Government officials in the functions to be transferred to a CJC. The opportunities and implications of the CJC model have been discussed in detail in order to help co-develop the Establishment Regulations and any Regulations of General Application.

From March 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic slowed this engagement because of more urgent priorities to support local government in its planning and delivery of essential services, especially for the most vulnerable in society.

Engagement with local government on CJs was resumed in July with Leaders, with the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), the WLGA and local government officers, including LLG and SWT leads and also function-specific experts in areas such as transport and planning.

The Local Government Sub Group of the Partnership Council for Wales has provided oversight throughout the process, providing joint Ministerial and local government ownership.

### **Approach to determining the area of each CJC**

The Bill allows for flexibility in relation to the area a CJC covers, and the Minister for Housing and Local Government has worked with local government Leaders to understand their desired footprint for the regional CJs being put in place under these first four sets of Establishment Regulations. It is important that this footprint was agreed with local government in order to provide an agreed baseline position for regional working that we can collectively build on for the future.

The WLGA political group Leaders wrote to the Minister in March 2020 to set out the local government view that the footprint for the CJs within these Establishment Regulations should be based on the existing city and growth deals geography.

Therefore, in line with the local government expressed preference, the Establishment Regulations have been prepared to reflect this request as follows:

<b>CJC Area</b>	<b>Constituent Principal Councils</b>	<b>National Park Authorities*</b>
Mid Wales	Ceredigion County Council Powys County Council	Brecon Beacons
South West Wales	Carmarthenshire County Council Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Pembrokeshire County Council Swansea County Council	Brecon Beacons and Pembrokeshire Coast
North Wales	Conwy County Borough Council Denbighshire County Council Flintshire County Council Gwynedd Council Isle of Anglesey County Council Wrexham County Borough Council	Snowdonia
South East Wales	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Bridgend County Borough Council Caerphilly County Borough Council Cardiff Council Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Monmouthshire County Council Newport County Borough Council (more commonly known as Newport City Council) Rhondda, Cynon, Taff County Borough Council Torfaen County Borough Council The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council	Brecon Beacons

\* As the Establishment Regulations include functions relating to strategic planning the regulations make provision about the membership of the committee by the National Park authority for that National Park. The National Parks have been included here to illustrate this membership.

### **Consultation Question Two:**

**These CJC areas have been agreed by local government Leaders as the most appropriate to reflect the functions being given to CJC's by these Establishment Regulations. Do you have any comments or observations on these CJC areas in relation to these functions or the future development of CJC's?**



## **The content of the Establishment Regulations**

The Establishment Regulations cover:

- The main governance and constitutional arrangements
- Finance, funding and budgetary matters
- Provisions for staffing and workforce
- The functions which will be exercised by the CJs

It is noted however that as these areas might overlap to a certain degree the regulations will not directly reflect these headings. However for the purpose of the consultation on the Establishment Regulations, the consultation has been set out against these four broad headings.

### **Regulations of General Application**

As was indicated in the introduction, it is proposed that there will be Regulations of General Application to accompany and support the Establishment Regulations. The content of those regulations remains subject to the outcome of this consultation and ongoing discussions with local government. The Regulations of General Application, as with the Establishment Regulations, will be underpinned by the key principles in Section two, particularly the ambition for CJs to be treated as part of the 'local government family'.

The Establishment Regulations set out what each CJC can do and some of the key aspects of their governance, finance and staffing. The Regulations of General Application will deal with the detail of how they will work, and where and how existing local government legislation will apply to them.

### **Consultation Question Three:**

- a) Do you agree with the approach to the development of the regulations for CJs as outlined in this consultation? Please give your reasons.**
- b) We have indicated throughout this document what may be included in the Regulations of General Application, subject to the outcome of this consultation. Whilst the Regulations of General Application are not the subject of this consultation, in order to inform their development we would welcome your views on anything else which should be covered?**

## **SECTION THREE – Governance and constitutional arrangements for CJs**

The Establishment Regulations provide the core constitutional structure to enable the CJC to establish itself. This structure will need to be underpinned by further detail in the Regulations of General Application, for example in any proposed application (with or without modification) of relevant local government legislation.

### **Composition**

The Establishment Regulations set out that each CJC will be comprised of a number of principal councils and the principal council areas combined will form the area of the CJC (the CJC areas set out in Section Two). The Establishment Regulations provide that a CJC will be run by a committee of its members and it will be the CJC which will be responsible for delivering the functions exercised by it and taking the necessary decisions required to deliver those functions. A CJC will be accountable to its constituent principal councils. Its members will report back to those principal councils and will respond to questions and scrutiny. However the CJC will have powers delegated to it and will make timely decisions without the need for ratification by its constituent principal councils.

### **Membership**

In line with the requirements of Part 5 of the Bill, and previous discussions and consultation with local government, the Establishment Regulations provide that the CJs will comprise of the Leaders (defined in the regulations as the senior executive member) of the constituent councils. Each member will be a member of the CJC until they cease to be the Leader of the constituent council.

The Leaders will decide whether additional representatives from within its constituent councils or other organisations will be invited to be members of the CJC. The Establishment Regulations therefore provide the CJC with the flexibility to co-opt such members to the CJC as it may determine necessary and appropriate to exercise its functions effectively. A CJC will be able to determine / agree the terms of membership of any co-opted member – e.g. voting rights, role, contribution towards funding etc.

Where the function of preparing a Strategic Development Plan is to be a function of a CJC, and any part of a National Park is in the area of the CJC, the regulations must make provision about the membership of the committee by the National Park authority for that National Park. The Establishment Regulations include providing the CJs being established with the Strategic Development Plan functions. The Establishment Regulations therefore provide for membership of the relevant National Park authority on each of the four CJs.

It will be for the relevant National Park authority (or authorities in the case of the South West Wales CJC) to nominate the appropriate representative from either the Chair, Vice Chair of the National Park authority or Chair of the National Park authority Planning Committee. The membership of the National Park authority, as specified in the Establishment Regulations, is prescribed (and therefore limited) to the exercise of the Strategic Development Plan functions of the CJC only. However a CJC may decide to co-opt the National Park authority, under such terms as they see appropriate, to support the delivery of other functions should they wish.

#### Consultation Question Four:

- a) **Do you agree with the proposed approach to membership of CJsCs including co-opting of additional members? Please give your reasons.**
- b) **What are your views on the role proposed for National Park Authorities on CJsCs, as described above?**

It is proposed that the Regulations of General Application will expressly prohibit staff of a CJC being members of a CJC, one of its constituent principal councils or a member of the National Park Authority. This approach to disqualification is consistent with those relating to the disqualification of principal council staff in relation to the membership of principal councils.

#### Voting arrangements

A CJC will be established on a 'one member one vote' basis. However, the Establishment Regulations also provide for a CJC once established to be able to adopt alternative voting procedures should they wish to do so.

In developing the Establishment Regulations it was considered whether there should be a minimum or maximum number of members (including co-opted members) of a CJC. In order to maintain the maximum flexibility for CJsCs it was not considered that this would be appropriate. However the Establishment Regulations do provide that a CJC is limited in the number of co-opted members with votes, but only in so far as that the number of votes which may be cast by co-opted members may not exceed the number of votes cast by council members, or in relation to strategic planning functions, council members and the National Park member(s).

The Establishment Regulations also provide for a quorum of no fewer than 70% of the voting members. The quorum for principal councils is currently 25%. However in considering the issue of quorum for a CJC it was felt that it should be set at sufficiently high a level to balance the need for the CJC to be able to exercise its functions effectively and the need to ensure that decisions of the CJC are representative of the majority of the voting members. This ensures the democratic accountability of all voting members.

#### Consultation Question Five:

- a) **What are your views on the proposed approach of 'one member one vote' and the flexibility for CJsCs to adopt alternative voting procedures?**
- b) **What are your views on the proposed quorum for CJsCs?**
- c) **What are your views on the proposed approach to voting rights for co-opted members to a CJC?**

#### Sub committees

The Establishment Regulations provide that a CJC will be able to establish sub committees to support it to exercise its functions should it wish to do so.

It will be for each CJC to decide if it wishes to have sub-committees, and who sits on them. However it might be reasonable to expect (although it is not required) for a CJC to have sub-committees for each of its main functions and that these sub-committees might engage broadly and involve a range of relevant stakeholders.

With this in mind it will be possible for CJC's sub-committees to consist of members of the constituent principal councils other than those members on the CJC itself - for example a relevant member or relevant portfolio holder of the principal council's executive – though it should be possible for this to be the case, particularly for example where the Leader is also the relevant member.

Other partner organisations may also be invited/co-opted to be sub-committee members should a CJC wish to do so. Again the terms of such membership will be for the CJC to decide and agree with the partners being co-opted.

### **Consultation Question Six:**

- a) What are your views on CJC's being able to co-opt other members and/or appoint people to sit on sub-committees?**

Statutory guidance (issued under part 5 of the Bill) will provide further advice for CJC's on consideration of wider involvement of partners in their work. The intention, as outlined in section seven, is for the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to apply to CJC's as they do to its constituent councils and so the ways of working around collaboration, involvement and taking an integrated approach will be particularly important to consider.

### **Consultation Question Seven:**

- a) Do you agree that the approach to co-option of members would enable wider engagement of stakeholders in the work of a CJC?**
- b) What might be needed to support CJC members in the involvement and engagement of appropriate stakeholders in their work?**

### **Standing orders**

It is proposed that the Establishment Regulations require that a CJC must make standing orders for the regulation of its proceedings and business. The Establishment Regulations include some core requirements for standing orders, for example regulation of the CJC's procedures. Subject to the outcome of this consultation we would expect any further detail on what the standing orders must provide for could be set out in the Regulations of General Application, for example approaches to appointing staff or dealing with issues of misconduct.

### **Code of conduct**

The Establishment Regulations require all CJC's to adopt a code of conduct for its members and staff. Subject to the outcome of this consultation the detail of the content of such a code may be provided for in the Regulations of General Application. For example this might include ensuring CJC's are relevant authorities for the purposes of Part 3 of the Local Government Act 2000, which will bring them within the ethical framework for local government which that Act establishes. This would also bring them into the scope of the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales.

### Consultation Question Eight:

- a) **Do you agree that members and staff of a CJC should be subject to a Code of Conduct and that the code should be similar to that of Principal Councils? Please give your reasons.**
- b) **What are your views on the adoption of a Code of Conduct for co-opted members?**
- c) **Should all co-opted members be covered by a code i.e. those with and without voting rights?**

### Liability of members

A CJC is a corporate body in its own right and the members will be taking decisions on functions which are theirs and theirs alone. In light of this, in the event of a claim or legal action we believe it would be inappropriate for liability to be allocated / apportioned to each constituent council. A CJC should therefore be required to indemnify its members (have its own indemnity) for the decisions they take. The CJC should hold the liability, rather than individual members, employees or others discharging functions on their behalf. Subject to the outcome of this consultation, such matters are likely to be included in the Regulations of General Application.

### Scrutiny and governance

In presenting the proposals for CJCs it is considered important that the structure and approach to a CJC seeks to maintain and support the democratic accountability of local government.

The Establishment Regulations provide that each CJC is required to put in place appropriate scrutiny arrangements. Such arrangements should be at the discretion of the CJC. The Establishment Regulations also require that a CJC has an Audit and Governance Committee. Through the Regulations of General Application, and subject to the outcome of this consultation, it will be necessary to ensure that any scrutiny committee has the appropriate powers and safeguards, for example as is provided for in section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000; and also the relevant requirements to take in to account the views of the public and a duty on the CJC to respond, for example section 21B of the Local Government Act 2000 and section 62 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011. We also believe that the Regulations of General Application should include provision so that any scrutiny committee does not include a member of the CJC (or one of its sub-committees), that it could include members (including non-executive members) of the constituent principal councils, that scrutiny committees will be able to source independent advice from experts and that membership should seek to take account of political balance in the constituent principal councils.

As well as having scrutiny arrangements we consider it appropriate that a CJC should be subject to more general oversight of their work. Section Four below for example includes matters relating to CJCs and the Auditor General.

In addition it might be considered appropriate for CJC to be subject to the same performance and governance regime as principal councils, as is included in Part 6 of

the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill, for example to undertake annual self-assessments on their performance and to seek external views through a panel of peers on their performance. This would be addressed in the Regulations of General Application.

### **Ancillary Powers**

To complement the specific functions transferred to the CJC the Establishment Regulations, also provide the CJC with the power to do anything to facilitate or which is incidental or conducive to the exercise of its functions.

## **SECTION FOUR – Finance, funding and budgetary matters**

The approach to finance, funding and budgetary matters in the regulations has been developed to reflect discussions with the Partnership Council Finance Sub Group (FSG) and Distribution Sub Group (DSG), with the Society of Welsh Treasurers and representatives of the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA).

The development of these regulations has been undertaken in line with the Good Practice Guide on Hypothecated Funding for Local Government and the guidance in the Legislation Handbook on assessing (and making provision for) the financial implications of primary legislation.

The Establishment Regulations make provisions relating to the funding of a corporate joint committee. Broadly speaking the Establishment Regulations make provision requiring a CJC to calculate its budget requirement, sets out how that requirement is to be met and requiring the CJC to keep proper accounts.

The Establishment Regulations require that a CJC calculates its budget requirements for each financial year to include the amounts required to exercise its functions; as well as for contingencies, for reserves, and outstanding liabilities. The intention is that a CJC must be sufficiently funded to deliver its specified functions/activities, including expenditure associated with administrative costs and overheads.

In calculating its budget requirements the Establishment Regulations require a CJC to take into account any amounts it estimates it will receive from sources other than its constituent councils and National Park members. Where the estimated expenditure for each annual year exceeds the funding received from other sources this will form the budget requirement of the CJC.

The Establishment Regulations require the CJC to calculate its budget requirement annually by 14 February preceding the relevant financial period. This is to align with the principal council budget setting process.

In practice the constituent principal councils will require the CJC to provide an indicative or provisional budget requirement to facilitate their own budget preparations. Although not provided for in regulations, the constituent principal councils may request this by 30 November preceding the relevant financial period (in line with current practices) and a CJC should be prepared for this.

In terms of the first year of operation however it will not be possible for a CJC to set its budget in this way. It may also be difficult for a CJC to ascertain what its initial budget may be as it will depend on its ambition in exercising its functions in its first year. It is proposed therefore for the Establishment Regulations to provide a reasonable timescale to set the first year's budget requirement, that is, within two months following the first meeting.

The Establishment Regulations do not prescribe any formula basis for funding of a CJC. The Establishment Regulations provide that the CJC will decide how the budget requirement will be met by the constituent principal councils (or in the case of the strategic planning functions by the National Park authority and the constituent principal councils.)

In the absence of unanimous agreement by the constituent councils and National Park member(s) on the amount payable), the establishment regulations provide for the amounts payable by the constituent principal councils (and National Park authority) to be directed by Welsh Ministers.

### Consultation Question Nine

- a) **What are your views on the proposed approach for determining the budget requirements of a CJC?**
- b) **What are your views on the timescales proposed (including for the first year) for determining budget requirements payable by the constituent principal councils?**

The CJC will be the accountable body for the funding provided from constituent principal councils and or directly received from any other funding streams

The Establishment Regulations enable CJCs to pay towards expenditure incurred or to be incurred in relation to carrying out its functions as it may determine. A CJC is also enabled to charge fees relating its specified functions. The regulations also enable CJCs to provide assistance by way of grant or contributions, to include repayable assistance, to support functions exercisable by them.

The Establishment Regulations require CJCs to keep proper accounting records and to prepare annual accounts in accordance with Welsh Ministers directions. It is proposed that these directions and the Regulations of General Application will ensure that CJCs are subject to the usual principal council checks and balances – including the financial duties and rules which require councils to act prudently in spending, which are overseen and checked by a Responsible Chief Finance Officer, and to ensure transparency, that annual accounts are published. For example the Regulations of General Application might require a CJC to follow proper (accounting) practices such as those specified by the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom, as amended or reissued from time to time.

The funding from constituent principal councils will be held and managed by the CJC. It is proposed that the Regulations of General Application will require the CJC to manage the funds under the same financial management arrangements as local government bodies in Wales. This might include for example, being subject to appropriate accounting and audit arrangements, as set out in the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, and in compliance with the mandatory Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Such an approach will provide independent and objective assurance regarding the effectiveness of the CJC's risk management, control and governance processes.

The intention is that through the Regulations of General Application all funding decisions taken by the CJC will be subject to review through annual external audit, which will undertake cost benefit analysis and assess the extent to which resources have been used economically, efficiently and effectively in delivering its services and activities. This will be in addition to the requirements on performance and governance set out in part 6 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill which are also intended to apply.



### **Consultation Question Ten**

- a) Do you agree that CJs should be subject to the same requirements as principal councils in terms of accounting practices? Please give your reasons.**
  
- b) Do you agree that the detail of how a CJC is to manage its accounting practices should be included in the Regulations of General Application? If not what more would be needed in the Establishment Regulations?**

## **SECTION FIVE – Staffing and workforce matters for CJs**

The approach to staffing and workforce matters has been developed to reflect the discussions at Partnership Council's Local Government Sub-Group and with principal council HR Directors and reflects the key principles set out in Section Two.

The Establishment Regulations provide for CJs to be able to employ and recruit staff in their own right; make agreements to place staff at the disposal of other devolved Welsh Authorities and have staff placed at the CJC's disposal; and undertake secondments (in and out) to enable CJs to discharge their functions. The intention is that there is flexibility for each CJC to determine the approach it takes to staffing, and for that approach to evolve over time as CJs potentially take on further operational as well as strategic functions.

As part of the approach to treating CJs as part of the 'local government family' the Regulations of General Application will seek to ensure that the provisions in law relating to staffing which apply to principal councils will also apply to CJs. It is important in this regard that any legislation which is applied to CJs provides any necessary rights for, and obligations on, the individual (or does not impose lesser rights or obligations) how-so-ever employed by the CJC (direct employment, secondment, loan, contract etc.).

It is intended that the detail which underpins the employment or loan of staff will sit within the Regulations of General Application with a view to ensuring that as publicly employed individuals officers of a CJC are:

- subject to the same / similar requirements of transparency / accountability etc. as employees of principal councils or any other public appointments.
- afforded similar or the same benefits as officers of principal councils
- subject to the same / similar restrictions on political activities (CJC will be required to have a code of conduct for employees).
- indemnified in the discharge of their duties on behalf of the CJC.

### **Terms and conditions**

It is not intended that the terms and conditions for staff employed by the CJC be left entirely to the discretion of the CJC as they are to a principal council. The Establishment Regulations therefore provide that staff employed by the CJC are to be appointed on the same or similar terms and condition (including conditions as to remuneration) as officers appointed to one of the constituent councils undertaking substantially similar or the same responsibilities. Such matters will be determined by the CJC.

The aim is to ensure that CJs do not adopt significantly different arrangements to the majority of their constituent principal councils, supporting the interchange of staff and collaborative working where possible. This approach will also ensure that a CJC is not used as a vehicle to erode (or indeed inflate) pay structures through the transfer of staff / functions to a CJC and where there is deviation / difference such deviation / difference is clear and transparent.

Where not otherwise provided for within the adopted terms and conditions it is the policy intent that the Regulations of General Application will require a CJC to prepare, annually, a statement setting out the authority's policies on the remuneration of its chief officers, the remuneration of its lowest paid employees and the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and the remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers.

## **Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment (TUPE) and Staff transfers**

The draft Establishment Regulations provide that where a member of staff appointed by a CJC has been transferred to a CJC from a constituent council, TUPE principles will apply.

This is not intended to predetermine if a CJC should directly employ the staff required to undertake a function – the nature of the staffing (employed, loaned or contracted) should remain a matter for the CJC to decide.

This approach is in line with The Code of Practice on Workforce Matters<sup>5</sup> (also known as the 'two tier code'). It is intended that the two tier code will be applied to a CJC itself, via the Regulations of General Application, and to any relationship between a principal council and a CJC in the delivery of its functions (save where otherwise covered by regulations).

### **Consultation Question Eleven:**

#### **What are your views on the proposed approach to staffing and workforce matters?**

##### **Executive Officers**

The Establishment Regulations require a CJC to appoint a number of statutory "executive officers" namely a Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer and Chief Governance Officer. The intention in this case is for a CJC to be able to directly employ, commission services or have relevant staff loaned from a constituent council to fulfil these roles as the CJC may determine.

The detail around the roles and responsibilities of these Executive Officers would be similar to the roles within principal councils, and subject to the outcome of this consultation the detail would be contained within the Regulations of General Application. For example:

- **Chief Executive** – The Regulations of General Application are likely to provide that the Chief Executive of a CJC will be subject to the same rules, procedures and proceedings as a Chief Executive of a principal council. The Remuneration of a Chief Executive of a CJC will be subject to the same arrangements as for a Chief Executive of a principal council i.e. be subject to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-02/circular-code-of-practice-on-workforce-matters.pdf>

- **Monitoring Officer** - The Regulations of General Application are likely to provide that the Monitoring Officer of a CJC operate in the same or similar way to that outlined for 'relevant authorities' in s5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Depending on the arrangements for the ethical framework relating to members of the CJC who are members of principal councils or national park authorities and co-opted members this officer may also play an equivalent role to that set out in Part 3 of the Local Government Act 2000.
- **Chief Financial Officer** - The Regulations of General Application are likely to require a CJC to ensure the effective use of public money and have responsibility for the proper administration of its financial affairs. The Responsible Chief Finance Officer will be responsible for reporting on the financial management and assurance of the CJC.
- **Chief Governance Officer** (interim title) - The Regulations of General Application are likely to provide for the role of the Chief Governance Officer - a role equivalent to a Head of Democratic Services for principal councils. It is not intended however for a CJC to be required to have a Democratic Services Committee, and therefore the regulations will not apply / extend any of the related functions / roles within the Local Government Measure 2011 to the Chief Governance Officer of a CJC.

It is intended that all executive roles within a CJC will be afforded the same statutory protection and indemnity as principal council statutory officers.

### Consultation Question Twelve:

**What are your views in relation to CJCs being required to have or have access to statutory "executive officers"?**

#### Standing Orders

The Establishment Regulations require CJCs to adopt standing orders to govern its proceedings and business (so far as not regulated by the Establishment Regulations). Such standing orders might include the procedures for the appointment and dismissal of, and taking disciplinary action against, a member of staff of the CJC (how-so-ever appointed). The detail of what is required within the standing orders however, subject to the outcome of this consultation, will be included in the Regulations of General Application.

#### Trade Unions

Trade Union recognition by public bodies in Wales is a Ministerial priority. We would therefore expect that CJCs would work under the same Social Partnership approach that exists between Trade Unions and principal councils. We would welcome views on how this might be achieved, for example through guidance or the adoption of a constituent councils Terms and Conditions.

### Consultation Question Thirteen:

**Do you have any other views on provision for staffing or workforce matters within the establishment regulations?**

## **SECTION SIX – The functions to be exercised by the CJs**

The Establishment Regulations set out which functions the CJs being established will exercise.

In the first instance all four of the CJs established in these regulations will be exercising the following functions:

- The function of preparing, monitoring, reviewing and revising of a Strategic Development Plan (SDP). These functions are set out in Part 6 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Bill).
- The function of developing a Regional Transport Plan – that is the functions of developing policies for transport in, to and from the CJC area and developing policies for implementing the Wales Transport Strategy. These functions are set out in the Transport Act 2000.
- The economic well-being function as provided for in Part 5 the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill. That is the power to do anything which the CJC considers is likely to promote or improve the economic wellbeing of its area. This will enable the principal councils, should they wish, to evolve the current regional approaches to the City and Growth deals into the CJC structures.

While the Bill provides for improving education to be one of the functions that Welsh Ministers can specify a CJC exercises this function is not provided for in these Establishment Regulations. Welsh Ministers have been clear that consideration of the role of CJs in the area of improving education is something that would evolve over time and further discussion was required with principal councils about the desired approach.

However, as previously stated, the constituent councils of these CJs may apply to Welsh Ministers to have the function of improving education (or any of their other functions) conferred on their CJC once the relevant provisions in the Bill enabling an application by principal councils to be made have commenced. In future, therefore, there may be divergence in what each of these CJC does. Any future proposals to add (including to omit or modify) principal council functions to a CJC would be subject to formal consultation as set out in the Bill.

In the case of the economic well-being power, and in relation to future functions that a CJC may exercise, it may be necessary for a CJC and its constituent councils to operate the powers concurrently. The CJC will need to agree a process with its constituent principal councils for agreeing how this might operate in practice including but not limited to the specific activities within the scope of the agreement, how agreement will be achieved, reviewed and how disputes may be resolved.

Arrangements for managing concurrent functions are not provided for in regulations. This is a matter for each CJC in response to local and regional needs and is in line with the approach to enable flexibility and local determination where possible. The Welsh Government intends to provide guidance to CJs and its constituent principal councils on this matter.

In relation to the strategic planning function, the details of the procedures for making and revising strategic development plans will be set out in the Town and Country Planning (Strategic Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2021, a consultation on which is being undertaken in parallel with this consultation. Should you wish to make any representations about those procedures, please do so via that consultation.

#### **Consultation Question Fourteen:**

- a) Is it clear what functions the CJsCs will exercise as a result of these establishment regulations? If not, why?**
- b) Do the establishment regulations need to say more on concurrence, if so what else is needed, or should that be left to local determination?**
- c) In your view are there any functions which might be appropriate to add to these CJsCs in the future? If yes, what?**

#### **Discharge of functions**

We intend to ensure that a CJC can arrange for the discharge of its functions as it sees fit except where decisions cannot be delegated from a CJC (see below). This could be through sub-committees, officers, other CJsCs, other principal councils and joint committees.

The Establishment Regulations explicitly address some of this, for example providing for the establishment of sub committees and enabling delegation of functions to them. However it is likely that much of the detail will be included in the Regulations of General Application. We would want to ensure a CJC has a scheme of delegation similar to that required of principal councils under section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972. The content of the scheme of delegation will be for the CJC to determine and it might include delegation to sub-committees, CJC members and / or staff appointed to deliver the functions of a CJC (howsoever appointed).

We have already discussed that the Establishment Regulations enable CJsCs to adopt a sub-committee model should it wish to do so including to delegate some of its functions. It would be for the CJC to determine the arrangements, including membership and voting rights, of its sub-committees as it sees fit.

While there is broad discretion on what a CJC can chose to delegate to a sub-committee we believe there are a small number of decisions which need to be made by the CJC itself. For example: agreement of budgets; the adoption or approval of plans or strategies (including the Regional Transport Plan and Strategic Development Plan); and consideration of any reports required by statute. It might be appropriate for the Establishment Regulations therefore to prevent the delegation of such matters and we would welcome your view on this as part of this consultation.

#### **Consultation Question Fifteen:**

**Do you think the regulations should provide for anything to be a decision reserved to the CJC rather than delegated to a sub-committee? If so what?**

## **Approach to transfer of the exercise of these functions**

The Establishment Regulations provide that a number of functions currently being exercised by individual principal councils will now be exercised by these CJsCs.

It will be important to understand the implications of the transfer of the exercise of these functions in terms of staff and resources and to consider how the transfer of the functions can proceed in an efficient and effective way. In line with the co-development approach which we have adopted to date, the Welsh Government will wish to work with principal councils, and the CJsCs once established, to support this transition process.

As an example, principal councils are currently responsible for developing local transport plans, and the function of preparing a transport plan will be transferred to each of the CJsCs to undertake on a regional basis – a Regional Transport Plan. Arrangements will need to be put in place to ensure an effective transition from local to regional arrangements.

It may be that in certain circumstances the transfer of the exercise of a function, and therefore the point at which the CJC is required to undertake that function, may be later than the point at which the CJsCs are established. This would also allow for a period of implementation and for the CJC to establish itself, as discussed later in this document.

For strategic planning there are no existing arrangements in place at a regional level so they do not give rise to the same need for transition arrangements. A CJC will be expected to commence delivery of these functions as soon as is reasonably practicable and as soon as the procedural regulations are made. It is important to note that principal councils will retain their existing function of preparing local development plans.

CJsCs will also have the economic well-being function from the point at which they are established. It is recognised that there are existing structures and arrangements at a regional level which promote and encourage economic well-being and it will be for the CJC and its constituent councils to consider the transition of existing regional arrangements such as the City / growth deals should they chose to bring these activities within the remit of their CJC. However, we would be interested to consider how the Welsh Government might be able to facilitate or support any transfer in this regard. We would welcome views as part of this consultation, particularly what issues might require resolving in moving from the current Joint Committee approach to a CJC

### **Consultation Question Sixteen:**

**What are your views on the approach to transfer of the exercise of functions to these CJsCs?**

## SECTION SEVEN – CJs and duties as a Public Body

As has been discussed previously one of the underlying principles in the development of the regulations establishing CJs is that CJs should be treated as part of the ‘local government family’ in determining how they should operate.

The intention is that CJs should also be treated more generally as a ‘public body’ and would therefore be captured by, or required to meet duties under, a number of existing pieces of legislation.

This might include for example:

- **The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** – which provides for a single principle (‘the sustainable development principle’) to guide the exercise of functions of specified public bodies to consider how they are meeting the needs of current generations without compromising future generations, to better address long term challenges such as inequalities of outcome.
- **The Equality Act 2010** - which makes it unlawful to discriminate against those persons with a protected characteristic under the 2010 Act. The Act places a ‘due regard’ duty (Public Sector Equality Duty) on public bodies to ensure that advancement of equality of opportunity is a key consideration when carrying out their functions. The Act also provides for a Socio-Economic Duty (proposed for commencement in Wales in 2021) which requires specified public bodies, to consider how their decisions might help reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage.
- **The Welsh Language Standards** – which gives Welsh-speakers improved, enforceable rights in relation to the Welsh language. They do this by imposing standards on organisations in relation to service provision, policy making, operations, promotion and record keeping.
- **The Environment Act 1995** - which places a duty on certain public bodies to have regard to the purposes for which National Parks were designated.
- **The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (Section 6)** – which requires a public authority to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems,
- **Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010** – which makes provision about contributing to the eradication of child poverty, and about arrangements for the participation of children in decisions that might affect them.

Where possible, and subject to the requirements of the relevant legislation, the application of relevant legislation in this case will be done through the Regulations of General Application rather than the Establishment Regulations. However we would welcome your views on the intended approach.

### Consultation Question Seventeen:

**What are your views on CJs being subject to wider public body duties as described above?**



## SECTION EIGHT – Implementation

The Establishment Regulations require that each of the CJs established must hold its first meeting by the end of September 2021.

Although it will be possible for a CJC to meet as soon as these Establishment Regulations come into force, it is accepted that a CJC will not be fully operational on day one and that it will take a short period of time for a CJC to take the necessary decisions, to make the necessary arrangements, and to develop its capacity to be able to exercise its functions effectively.

For example it is likely that the early meetings will focus on matters such as the election of the chair and deputy chair, appointing statutory officers, adopting codes of conduct and standing orders, agreeing wider membership and any committee structures and putting in place appropriate financial systems.

The frequency of meetings will be left to each CJC to consider as is appropriate to their own requirements and it may be that the frequency of meetings change as the CJC evolves and becomes more established.

The Minister for Housing and Local Government has previously committed in discussion with the Partnership Council, Local Government sub group to support local government in establishing these CJs. Subject to agreement this might include supporting CJs in meeting their set up costs in the short term as was recommended in independent research commissioned to support the development of the RIA which accompanies this consultation<sup>6</sup>. It might also be appropriate to provide some support in advance of any CJC being established to support the transition process.

### Consultation Question Eighteen:

- a) **The Welsh Government is keen to continue working closely with local government and others on the establishment and implementation of CJs. Do you have any views on how best we can achieve this?**
- b) **In your view, what core requirements / components need to be in place to ensure a CJC is operational, and exercising its functions effectively?**
- c) **In particular, what do you think needs to be in place prior to a CJC meeting for the first time, on the day of its first meeting and thereafter?**

### Guidance

It is recognised that whilst regional working is not new for local government the CJC model is. It may be helpful therefore to provide guidance to support the establishment of CJs. Initially the intention would be to focus on guidance around the constitutional, governance, finance and staffing arrangements with function specific guidance provided at a later date as and when required.

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<sup>6</sup> [Collaboration between local authorities in Wales Report](#)

The approach to the development of the CJC model to date has been one of co-development and collaboration with local government. The intention is to continue with this approach in the implementation of the Establishment regulations and in the development of any guidance to CJsCs.

**Consultation Question Nineteen:**

- a) Do you think it would be helpful for the Welsh Government to provide guidance on the establishment and operation of CJsCs?**
- b) Are there any particular areas which should be covered by the guidance?**

**General**

**Consultation Question Twenty:**

- a) How can the Welsh Government best support principal councils to establish CJsCs?**
- b) Are there areas the Welsh Government should prioritise for support?**
- c) Is there anything that CJsCs should/should not be doing that these Establishment Regulations do not currently provide for?**

## **SECTION NINE – Supporting Documents**

To help assess the potential impact of establishing the CJsCs outlined above we have published the following draft documents in support of the regulations:

- A Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA)
- An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

### **Regulatory Impact Assessment**

The Regulatory Impact Assessment assesses the potential costs and savings, and the benefits and dis-benefits associated with establishing, through regulations, these CJsCs.

The options that have been considered in preparing the RIA are:

- Option 1 – Do nothing. That is that the policy is not implemented, regulations are not made and CJsCs are not established.
- Option 2 – Implement the policy and establish CJsCs by regulations.

The RIA focusses on the core administrative costs of establishing and operating a CJC and the delivery of the functions specified in the regulations. The RIA has been presented to reflect the scope for local discretion that the regulations provide. Much of the costs within the RIA will depend on the decisions made by each CJC in the way that it operates and governs itself within the flexibilities the regulations allow.

The RIA therefore presents a range of estimated costs set around a possible minimum and maximum which seek to reflect the flexibilities and that give a sense of the potential costs associated with the range of administrative arrangements which CJsCs could put in place. It has not been possible to assess definitively all potential costs, particularly on all stakeholders, but we would expect CJsCs to consider the costs and benefits and impacts on different stakeholders prior to taking action.

A breakdown of the assumptions which underpin the RIA can be found in paragraphs 12-32 of the RIA, and a breakdown of the costs and benefits can be found in paragraph 43-145 of the RIA.

### **Integrated Impact Assessment**

An Integrated Impact Assessment Summary has been undertaken to assess the most significant impacts, positive and negative of establishing these CJsCs via regulations. A summary of the conclusions of this assessment has been published as part of this consultation along with details on the monitoring and evaluation of the proposal.

We would welcome your views on the context of these document, especially the Regulatory Impact Assessment as to determine if the costs and benefits provided are fair and reasonable.

**Consultation Question Twenty One:**

- a) Do you agree with our approach to, and assessment of, the likely impacts of the regulations? Please explain your response.**
- b) Do you have any additional/alternative data to help inform the final assessment of costs and benefits contained within the Regulatory Impact Assessment? If yes, please provide details.**

**Consultation  
Response Form**

Your name:

Organisation (if applicable):

Email / telephone number:

Your address:

**Summary of consultation questions**

**Consultation Question One:**

- a) **What are your views on CJsCs being subject to broadly the same powers and duties as principal councils?**
- b) **Do you agree that CJsCs should have broadly the same governance and administrative framework as a principal council provided that this is proportionate? Please give your reasons.**
- c) **Do you agree that members of CJsCs should have appropriate discretion on the detail of constitutional and operational arrangements? Please give your reasons.**

**Consultation Question Two:**

**These CJC areas have been agreed by local government Leaders as the most appropriate to reflect the functions being given to CJsCs by these Establishment Regulations. Do you have any comments or observations on these CJC areas in relation to these functions or the future development of CJsCs?**

**Consultation Question Three:**

- a) **Do you agree with the approach to the development of the regulations for CJsCs as outlined in this consultation? Please give your reasons.**
- b) **We have indicated throughout this document what may be included in the Regulations of General Application, subject to the outcome of this consultation. Whilst the Regulations of General Application are not the subject of this consultation, in order to inform their development we would welcome your views on anything else which should be covered?**

**Consultation Question Four:**

- a) **Do you agree with the proposed approach to membership of CJsCs including co-opting of additional members? Please give your reasons.**
- b) **What are your views on the role proposed for National Park Authorities on CJsCs, as described above?**

### **Consultation Question Five:**

- a) What are your views on the proposed approach of 'one member one vote' and the flexibility for CJsCs to adopt alternative voting procedures?**
- b) What are your views on the proposed quorum for CJsCs?**
- c) What are your views on the proposed approach to voting rights for co-opted members to a CJC?**

### **Consultation Question Six:**

**What are your views on CJsCs being able to co-opt other members and/or appoint people to sit on sub-committees?**

### **Consultation Question Seven:**

- a) Do you agree that the approach to co-option of members would enable wider engagement of stakeholders in the work of a CJC?**
- b) What might be needed to support CJC members in the involvement and engagement of appropriate stakeholders in their work?**

### **Consultation Question Eight:**

- a) Do you agree that members and staff of a CJC should be subject to a Code of Conduct and that the code should be similar to that of Principal Councils? Please give your reasons.**
- b) What are your views on the adoption of a Code of Conduct for co-opted members?**
- c) Should all co-opted members be covered by a code i.e. those with and without voting rights?**

### **Consultation Question Nine**

- a) What are your views on the proposed approach for determining the budget requirements of a CJC?**
- b) What are your views on the timescales proposed (including for the first year) for determining budget requirements payable by the constituent principal councils?**

### **Consultation Question Ten**

- a) Do you agree that CJsCs should be subject to the same requirements as principal councils in terms of accounting practices? Please give your reasons.**
- b) Do you agree that the detail of how a CJC is to manage its accounting practices should be included in the Regulations of General Application? If not what more would be needed in the Establishment Regulations?**

#### **Consultation Question Eleven:**

**What are your views on the proposed approach to staffing and workforce matters?**

#### **Consultation Question Twelve:**

**What are your views in relation to CJsCs being required to have or have access to statutory “executive officers”?**

#### **Consultation Question Thirteen:**

**Do you have any other views on provision for staffing or workforce matters within the establishment regulations?**

#### **Consultation Question Fourteen:**

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### **Welsh Language Questions**

#### **Consultation Question Twenty Two:**

- a) We would like to know your views on the effects that establishment of CJsCs would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- b) What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

#### **Consultation Question Twenty Three:**

Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy for the establishment of CJsCs could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

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We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues



**which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:**

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## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CABINET

18TH DECEMBER 2020

#### REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO STORM DENNIS

#### REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (COUNCILLOR A MORGAN)

Author: Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the Council's response to Storm Dennis and set out a series of recommendations for Cabinet's consideration that enhance the Council's short term and long term response to extreme weather events and which limit the impact of flooding on those communities most at risk.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the action taken by the Council in respect of Storm Dennis:
- 2.1.1 Before the Storm;
  - 2.1.2 During the Storm;
  - 2.1.3 Immediately after the Storm;
  - 2.1.4 In the days and weeks following the Storm;
  - 2.1.5 The longer-term response to repairing and replacing damaged infrastructure and preventing future flooding events.
- 2.2 Consider the feedback from the work to date of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in respect of its review of the events of Storm Dennis and the multi-agency response as set out in Appendix C.
- 2.3 Consider and approve the recommendations for improvement set out in Section 11 of this report.
- 2.4 Require that progress against the recommendations for improvement are included in the Financial and Performance Management Reports, presented to Cabinet each quarter and to the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

- 2.5 Request that a further report which sets out the findings of the nineteen Section 19 Investigation Reports of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 currently being undertaken are presented to a future Cabinet in the New Year.

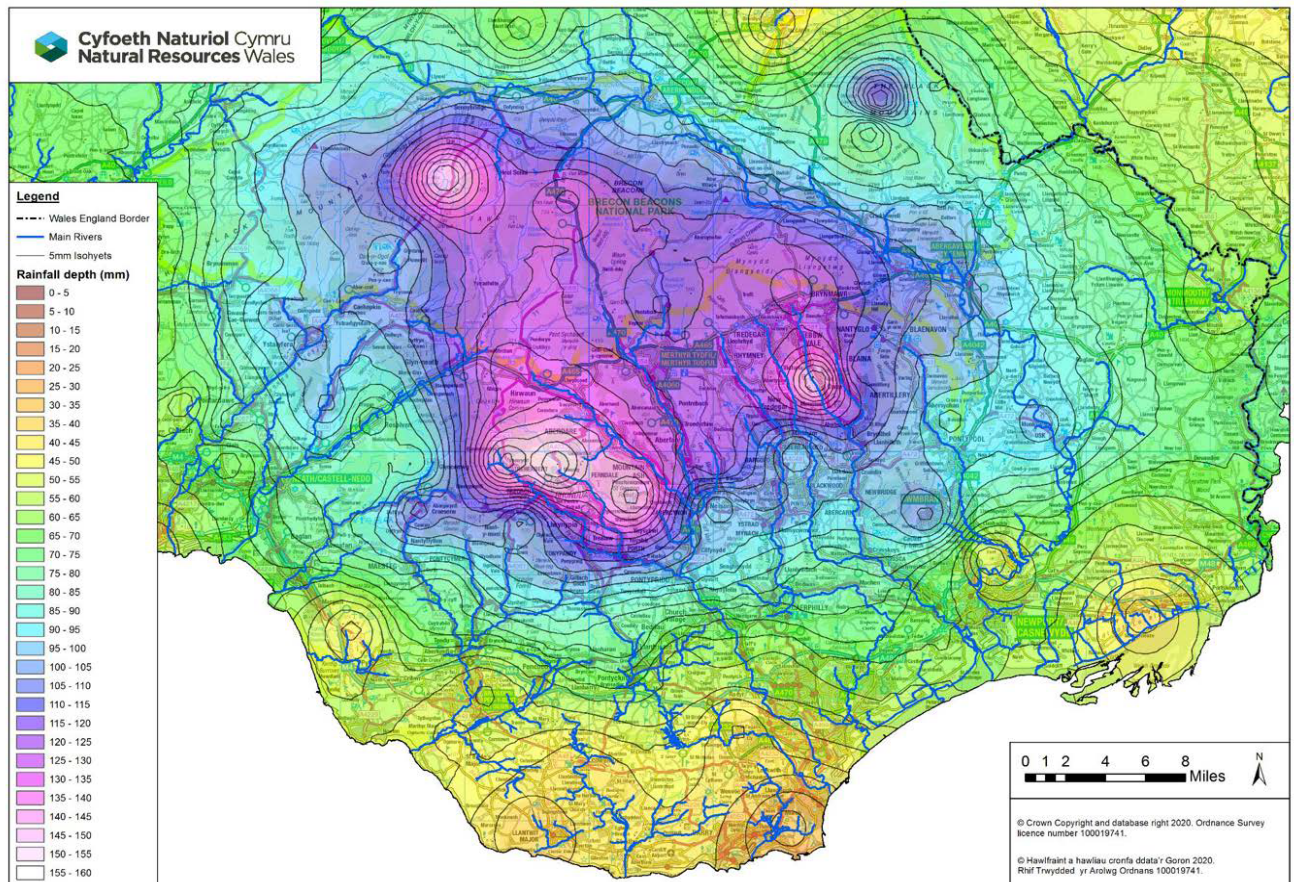
### **3 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To provide a comprehensive summary for Cabinet of the action taken by the Council in response to the events of Storm Dennis; to consider the lessons to be learnt from the extreme weather event; and to set out a series of recommendations to enhance the Council's short term and long term response to flooding to limit the impact on those communities most at risk
- 3.2 This report does not determine the reasons why specific communities, homes and businesses were flooded. The Council is currently undertaking Section 19 Flood and Water Management Act 2010 Investigation Reports, and these will be available in early 2021.

### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 During February 2020, Wales was hit by four major storms:
- Storm Ciara – 8 – 9 February 2020;
  - Storm Dennis – 15 – 17 February 2020;
  - Unnamed Storm – 21 – 24 February 2020;
  - Storm Jorge – 28 February – 1 March 2020.

**Figure 1 - Rainfall Isohyet Map showing rainfall over a 48-hour period during Storm Dennis with the greatest intensity over RCT**



4.2 These storms badly affected Wales within a period of just four weeks, with record rainfall and river flows causing some of the most significant flooding events seen in Wales since the 1970's. To understand the impact of Storm Dennis on Rhondda Cynon Taf, we need to recognise that this was an extreme weather event that happened after a series of other events:

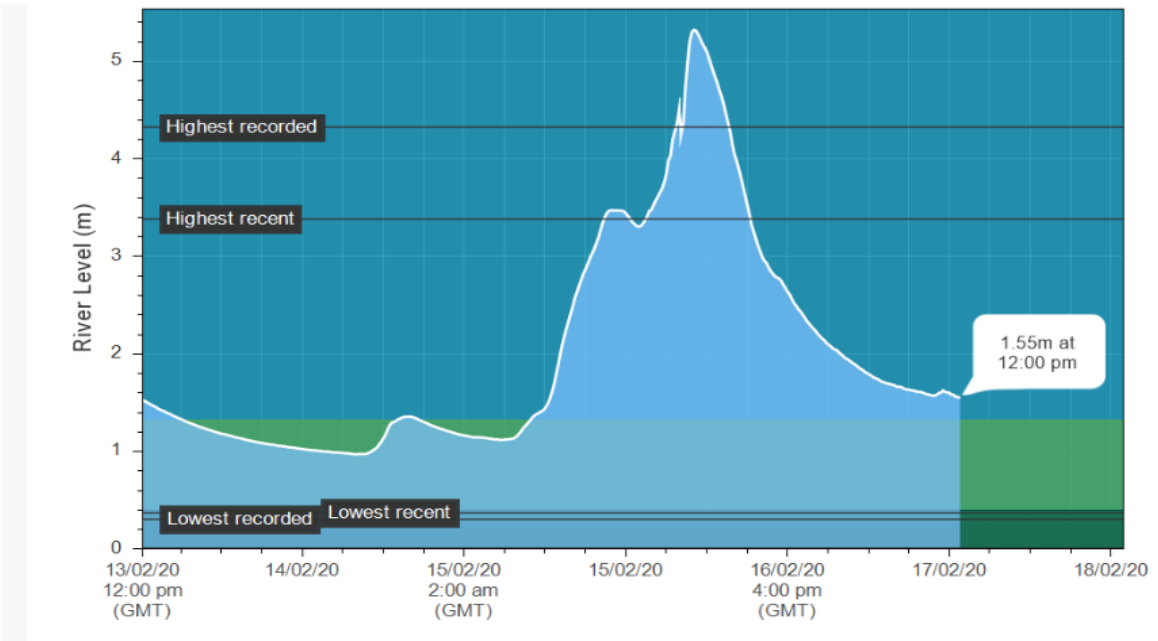
- February 2020 was the wettest February on record in Wales and the fifth wettest month ever recorded;
- Rainfall in the catchment areas of Wales during these events was of such intensity that many rivers reacted extremely quickly, reaching record levels and flows. This was a result of the fact that river catchments were already saturated from the previous months of near continuous rain;
- Storm Dennis resulted in substantial and intense rainfall with significant impacts on river flows, river levels and flooding in Rhondda Cynon Taf. During Storm Dennis:
  - Nant yr Ysfa gauge, situated between the Cynon and Rhondda Fach river catchments, received 130.4mm of rainfall in 24 hours, the equivalent to 72% of an entire month's rainfall in a single day.



- At the top of the Rhondda Fawr River catchment, Tyn Y Waun gauge received 132.4 mm of rainfall in 24 hours, this equates to 62% of a month's rainfall in a single day;
- In Pontypridd, the River Taff reached its highest level since records began in 1968. Peak flow passing through Pontypridd was estimated at 805 m<sup>3</sup>/s, enough to fill an Olympic size swimming pool in just over three seconds. This river level is 78cm higher than the previous record-level set during the 1979 floods.

4.3 We also need to take into account the impact of the topography of the County Borough. The rivers in Rhondda Cynon Taf, are relatively steep and flow through narrow valleys that are underlain by impermeable geology. As a consequence, runoff from headwaters rapidly reaches main rivers, and river levels respond quickly following intense rainfall. In a matter of hours, they rose from normal river levels to some of the highest on record. Due to this impermeable geology and the limited amount of groundwater, there is little in the way of base flow, which means when the rainfall ceases, river levels recede quickly as illustrated below.

**Figure 2 – River level records for River Taff at Pontypridd during Storm Dennis**



- 4.4 The Taff river level was 78cm higher than the previous highest level recorded during the 1979 floods, and went from an estimated flow of 55 tonnes of water per second at 7:00am on 15 February, in relatively normal conditions, increasing in excess of 14 times to a peak flow estimated at 805 tonnes of water per second in just 22 hours during Storm Dennis - an increase of 4.2m in height by 4:45am on 16 February.

**Was this level of rainfall predicted and in particular, forecast to fall on Rhondda Cynon Taf?**

- 4.5 To plan for extreme weather events, such as those experienced in February, the Council and the emergency services require robust and accurate weather and rainfall forecasts. Over the past few years, we have seen an improvement in the ability of the UK Flood Forecasting Centre to forecast rainfall more accurately and we need to continue to see further improvement into the future. In Wales, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) works with the Flood Forecasting Centre (FFC) (a partnership between the Met Office and Environment Agency) to analyse the latest forecast information. Together, NRW and the FFC assess the weather forecast and flood risk in Wales, summarising the information in the daily Flood Guidance Statement (FGS). The FGS goes to local authorities and emergency responders and is also replicated on the NRW website. It serves as an early warning and allows organisations to prepare for possible impacts.
- 4.6 Figure 3 below is taken from the Flood Guidance Statement issued in the lead up to and during Storm Dennis. The content of the specific FGS highlights the areas forecast to be impacted by the storm and the forecast impact and



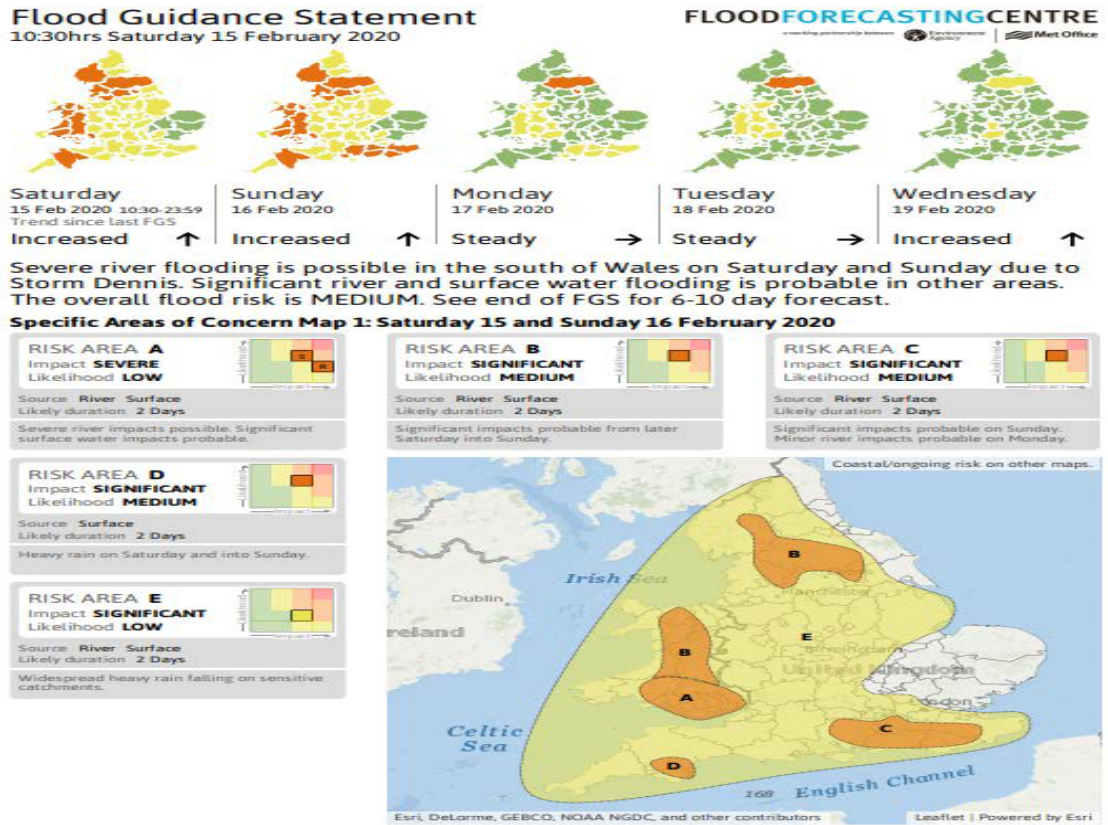
likelihood in each case. It shows the build-up to Storm Dennis and that stormy weather was being forecast five days prior (Tuesday 11 February), and that the signals for significant impacts increased on the Thursday (13 February). This did help the Council and other partners prepare. The FGS issued on Saturday 15 February indicated severe impacts but remained at 'Medium' status due to the forecast likelihood. However, the overall flood risk only went to the 'High' risk (indicating a high likelihood of severe impacts) on the Sunday morning, after the Storm had already flooded many communities.

**Figure 3 – Five day forecast summary from Flood Guidance Statements leading up to and during Storm Dennis**

Warning Level	Event	Date of issue	Time	Likelihood	Impact	Range Rainfall (mm)
Yellow	Wind	11/02/2020	10:34	Medium	Low	N/A
Yellow	Rain	11/02/2020	11:36	Low	Medium	100-120
Yellow	Wind	12/02/2020	10:24	Medium	Low	N/A
Amber	Rain	13/02/2020	10:57	Medium	Medium	100-120
Amber	Rain	15/02/2020	11:07	Low	High	100-120
Red	Rain	16/02/2020	06:10	High	High	100-140

4.7 Figure 4 below shows content from the Flood Guidance Statement from the morning of the 15 February, when Storm Dennis was beginning to impact Wales. The severe impacts forecast for much of South Wales should be noted in 'Risk Area A', although this was also highlighted at a 'Low' likelihood at this stage in the weather event, giving the overall flood risk status as 'Medium'.

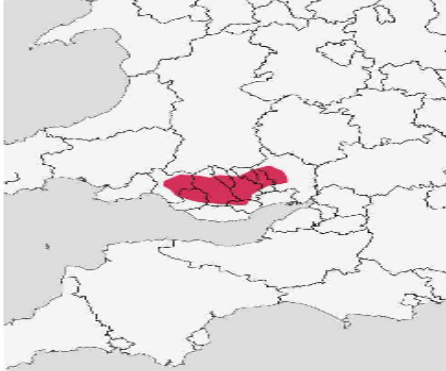
**Figure 4 - Content from Flood Guidance Statement Issued on Saturday 15 February at 10:30am -Source: Flood Forecasting Centre**



**Figure 5 – The final warning issued on Sunday morning at 6.10am**

**Met Office** National Severe Weather Warning Service

**Red warning Rain** Between **06:10 Sun 16 Feb 2020** and **11:00 Sun 16 Feb 2020**




**Storm Dennis is expected to bring further heavy rain for a time on Sunday morning, increasing the likelihood of high impacts.**

**What to expect**

- Danger to life from fast flowing or deep floodwater
- Extensive flooding to homes and businesses is likely
- Collapsed or damaged buildings or bridges
- Road closures and bus and train service delays and cancellations
- Dangerous driving conditions because of spray and flooded roads
- Loss of power and other essential services, such as gas, water, mobile phone service
- Communities could be completely cut off by floodwater, perhaps for several days

**Further details**  
Prolonged, heavy rain will continue until mid-morning, easing slowly into the middle of the day. This rain will bring event totals to between 100 and 140mm over higher ground in south Wales.



**Issued at 06:10 Sun 16 Feb, 2020**  
For enquiries regarding this warning please contact the Met Office Weather Desk  
Phone: 03 70 900 0100 E-mail: enquiries@metoffice.gov.uk  
Visit: www.metoffice.gov.uk/premium/hazardmanager

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- 4.8 The information provided by the Flood Forecasting Centre, to support councils and other agencies plan for weather events, are forecasts based on the available information and the knowledge and experience of the professionals undertaking this function. It is very difficult to precisely predict exactly where rain will fall and to what extent. However, it is essential that further investment is made by UK and the devolved governments to enhance the flood forecasting and in particular the identification of intense periods of high volumes of rainfall in areas such as the South Wales valleys, where there are few opportunities to capture and store the water.
- 4.9 An improvement in forecasting of such extreme events is essential to avoid the future loss of life. On reflection of the events of Storm Dennis, we were fortunate that the storm occurred at night when the vast majority of people were inside their homes. As a result, there were no direct deaths arising from the storm. If the storm had occurred during a working day with vehicles and pedestrians moving around, the situation could have been very different.

**What has been the impact of the Storm on the communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf?**



4.10 Flooding has a very significant negative and lasting impact on people's mental and physical wellbeing, their homes and their businesses. It also has other adverse impacts on the wider infrastructure that all communities rely on such as roads, bridges, rail networks, public services and public buildings.

4.11 The table below sets out the number of properties (domestic and commercial) impacted by the February storms across Wales and it highlights the overwhelming impact on properties in Rhondda Cynon Taf during Storm Dennis.

**Number of Properties affected by the three named February 2020 storms**

<b>Local Authority Area</b>	<b>Storm Ciara</b>	<b>Storm Dennis</b>	<b>Storm Jorge</b>	<b>February Total</b>
Blaenau Gwent	0	125	0	125
Bridgend	0	16	13	29
Caerphilly	0	203	0	203
Carmarthenshire	2	63	0	65
Cardiff	0	21	5	26
Ceredigion	1	3	0	4
Conwy	172	0	0	172
Denbighshire	23	0	0	23
Flintshire	0	20	0	20
Gwynedd	10	0	0	10
Isle of Anglesey	6	0	0	6
Merthyr Tydfil	0	225	0	225
Monmouthshire	0	215	11	226
Neath Port Talbot	0	88	3	91
Newport	0	11	0	11
Pembrokeshire	0	0	0	0
Powys	0	232	0	232
<b>Rhondda Cynon Taf</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1,476</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>1,576</b>
Swansea	0	45	0	45
Torfaen	0	21	0	21
Vale of Glamorgan	0	1	19	20
Wrexham	0	0	0	0
<b>Storm Totals</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>2,765</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>3,130</b>

4.12 The 1,476 properties in Rhondda Cynon Taf flooded during Storm Dennis can be analysed as follows:

<b>Residential</b>	<b>Commercial</b>	<b>Total</b>
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River Flooding (Fluvial)	380	319	699
Surface Water Flooding (Pluvial)	690	87	777
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>1,476</b>

- 4.13 Flood water poses a high risk to life and can devastate homes, businesses and communities; and it will take a long time to recover. It also has a very significant negative and lasting impact on people’s mental and physical wellbeing which is immeasurable.
- 4.14 The overall economic damage of Storm Dennis is difficult to calculate given the scale of the impact of the flooding on properties and infrastructure. However, the Association of British Insurers estimate that the average household flood claim is £32,000. Therefore, given an estimated 1,070 households were flooded in Rhondda Cynon Taf during Storm Dennis, the flood damage to household property alone is estimated to be in excess of £34 million. This will not include the substantial economic costs suffered by businesses, other non-residential properties and infrastructure across the County Borough – estimated at over £100m of damage to public and private infrastructure.
- 4.15 As a Council, the significant prolonged rainfall during the first few months of the 2019/20 winter has created other potential issues that have had to be resolved such as securing the safety of high-risk former colliery tips. The significant landslide at Tylorstown, when over 60,000 tonnes of former colliery spoil fell into the Rhondda Fach River during Storm Dennis, has resulted in the Council undertaking considerable engineering works to ensure a further 100,000 tonnes does not slide into the river. The Council has already committed £2.5m to address the immediate issues and estimates the final costs to be of the order of £12.5m - £15m. The UK Government has confirmed financial support for the first phase of this work.
- 4.16 We have estimated that the storm damage caused to highways infrastructure assets, drainage systems, and Council buildings such as the National Lido for Wales, Ynysangharad Park will be in excess of £76m, a small element of which is covered by the Council’s insurance. These costs do not include the costs associated with the landslip and coal tips. To replace all of the bridges damaged or destroyed by the river flooding will take up to three to five years to complete, and the Council is working with Welsh Government to agree a financial programme to complete this work.

## Who has the responsibility for Flood Management in Wales?

4.17 The responsibility for Flood Management in Wales is set out in Welsh Government's "*National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management for Wales*". This document sets out that Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) in Wales involves a number of organisations, including 28 Risk Management Authorities (RMAs), who have a duty to work together and co-operate on FCERM activity, including schemes and reporting. In summary the key organisations and their respective duties are set out below:

- Natural Resources Wales (NRW) are responsible for managing flood risk from main rivers and the sea. NRW can also undertake certain activities on ordinary watercourses to reduce risk, such as altering water levels and existing works. NRW also have a strategic oversight and general supervision role. This is about having a Wales-wide understanding of all sources of flooding, coastal erosion and helping to communicate the risks associated with them. NRW are responsible for providing advice to the Welsh Government as well as helping inform RMAs and the public through their forecasting, warning and mapping activities.
- The 22 Local Authorities as Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA) are responsible for managing flood risk from surface water, groundwater and from smaller streams called ordinary watercourses. They are also responsible for managing the drainage of local highways under the Highways Act. Their duties include preparing Local Flood Strategies, investigating all significant flooding and maintaining asset registers on defences in their area.
- Water companies operating in Wales have operational responsibility for drainage via public sewers (foul, surface-water and/or combined).
- The Welsh Government, as highway authority for trunk roads, has a responsibility for trunk road drainage under the Highways Act.

4.18 On 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020, NRW published a series of reports in respect of the February 2020 floods. A copy of the reports can be read on the following link: <https://naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/february2020floods?lang=en>

4.19 The Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority, has identified 28 Flood Investigation Areas of which 19 will require the publication of a Section 19

Investigation Report, due to their significance. A Section 19 Flood and Water Management Act 2010 investigation report is a public statement of the circumstances of a flood event that sets out which parties have a role in managing the risks. When investigating a flood, in accordance with Section 19, the Council will publish a report of the findings, where no other risk management authority is exercising or proposing to exercise its risk management functions and where:

- The flooding causes internal flooding to 20 or more properties or critical infrastructure assets in a localised area;
- The flood mechanism is complex, for instance, where there are 2 or more sources of floodwater involved or the source or mechanism of the flooding is unclear and there is a public interest to explain this mechanism;
- The Council determines that a report of the flooding is merited.

4.20 **The nineteen Section 19 Investigation Reports are being prepared by Council officers and will be published in the New Year. Therefore, this report does not form an opinion on why specific communities were flooded.** It is essential that the Section 19 Investigations understand the movement of the rainfall during the Storm and identify the exact causes of the flooding. For example: in respect of the flooding of Pentre, various opinions have been expressed that this was caused by NRW's approach to forestry management, or Dwr Cymru pumps failing, or the Council's culverts or highway drainage being blocked and not maintained. The Section 19 Report will consider all the facts and determine whether it was one or a combination of events that caused the flood. For example, this will also include the flooding event at Trehafod, where Dwr Cymru has made payments to residents on a goodwill basis but has not accepted responsibility in respect of issues at the local pumping station. The reports will also give an overview of how different types of infrastructure performed against current design standards. For example:

- Highway drainage – Q30 (1 in 30 year event);
- Ordinary watercourses – Q100 (1 in 100 year);
- Sewers – Q30 (1 in 30 year);
- Main rivers – Q100 (1 in 100 year).

**Is Rhondda Cynon Taf an area that is likely to be prone to flooding in the future?**

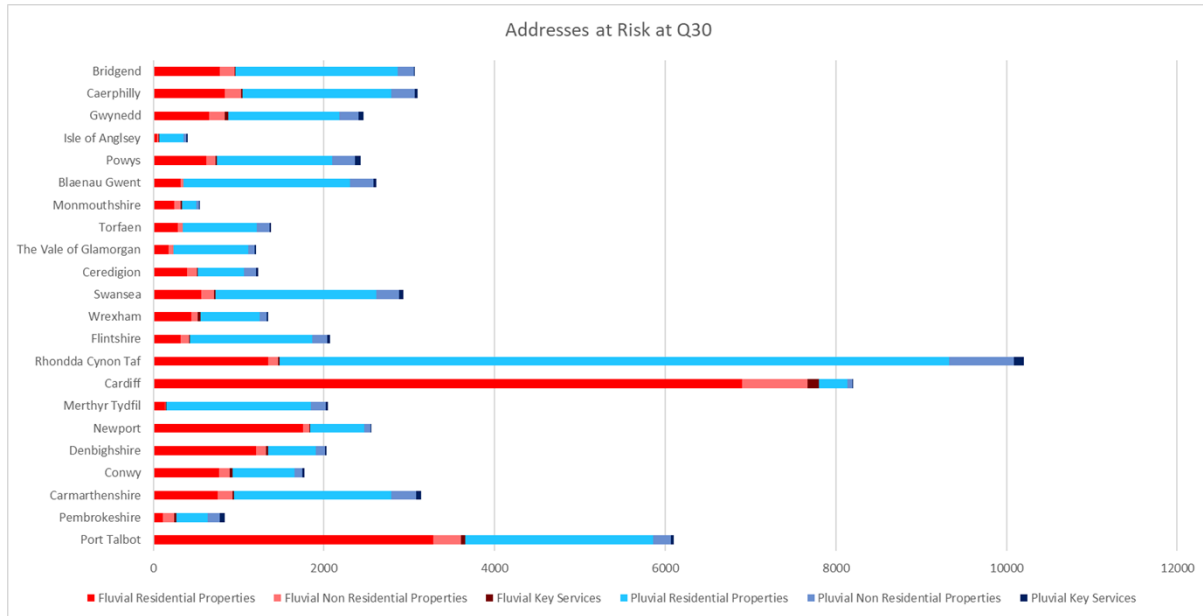
4.21 Flooding and coastal erosion are two of the biggest natural hazard risks affecting the safety and sustainability of Welsh communities. Across Wales over 245,000 properties are at risk of flooding from rivers, the sea and surface water.

Managing this risk from flooding is a priority for the Welsh Government and although investment for flood and coastal erosion risk management has been boosted over the last decade, difficult decisions will still have to be made as to where investment is made and the benefits of prioritising investment must be realised.

- 4.22 To support the prioritisation of investment, Welsh Government has prepared the Communities at Risk Register (CaRR) that identifies those most at-risk communities by considering and ranking flood risk from all sources, including Fluvial (Main Rivers), Tidal and Pluvial (Surface Water and Ordinary Watercourses) based on danger to life within individual communities. The CaRR has been analysed to assess flood risk within Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.
- 4.23 The key findings from the review of the Combined flood risk scores and rankings within the CaRR has identified the following key points:
- Large parts of the Rhondda remain at high risk of both fluvial and pluvial flooding; and
  - 13 communities fall within the top 5% of communities in Wales at high risk of both fluvial and pluvial flooding.
- 4.24 The following graphs set out the challenge we face compared to the rest of Wales, and the potential household properties that could be flooded by a number of possible flood events.



**Figure 8: Outlines the Receptors at risk of flooding during a one in a 30 year (Q30) storm event from all sources and compared against Local Authorities in Wales.**



4.25 The risk analysis highlights that the majority of the Rhondda valley is at significant risk of surface water and ordinary watercourse flooding, along with parts of the Cynon and lower Taf valley. This risk is primarily due to the steep sided valleys which cause rapid runoff of water towards residential development confined to the valley floors. The risk of Fluvial (river) Flooding is primarily owed to the urban extent of the communities within RCT around the flood plain areas.

4.26 The data from the CaRR does highlight the need for Welsh Government and NRW to prioritise their investment in flood prevention and alleviation schemes in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

## 5 HOW DID THE COUNCIL PREPARE FOR STORM DENNIS?

5.1 Over the past few years, the Council has implemented its Winter Plan that sets out how the Council prepares for the challenging winter weather, which includes significant rainfall, ice and snow events. Prior to Storm Dennis was no different, other than the preparations were greater than normal due to the forecast levels of rainfall over 100mm.

5.2 In the week preceding Storm Dennis additional Highways and Streetcare staff were deployed to inspect and clear all priority culverts within the County Borough. **Orders of large quantities of sandbags were placed, purchasing every sandbag locally, these included prefilled sandbags or empty, in**

**total this amounted to a quantity of 17,381, these were in addition to the 600 plus that were already in stock. All these sandbags were delivered to homes and business throughout the County Borough in the period 15<sup>th</sup> February to the 29<sup>th</sup> February.**

- 5.3 It is worth noting that before the storm the Council purchased all available sandbags on the market, indeed a neighbouring council contacted this Council to enquire whether they could purchase our sandbags.
- 5.4 We also ensured all available staff were called upon, along with external contractors, to ensure we had adequate resources to cover the upcoming event. These staff were then allocated slots on the rota **to supply 48 hours of constant cover for the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> February with both Abercynon and Dinas Depots being fully operational in this period.** The Highways and Streetcare team working in conjunction with the Flood Risk Management Team in respect of inspection and cleaning of culverts. This additional resource was over and above the normal contract hours work when there would have been **100 plus operational staff dealing with flooding issues within this period.** In doing so staff undertook asset inspections on **300 critical infrastructure assets** i.e. culvert inlets, manholes and outfalls prior to the storm.
- 5.5 To respond to the risk of flooding, the Council also ordered six **6-inch pumps**, four of which were delivered and in position by Friday the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2020, with the other two being supplied on the 19<sup>th</sup> February. Two Drainage Sub Contractors were also employed to create a reactive team to respond to issues with specific heavy-duty equipment to support the Council's response.
- 5.6 The Contact Centre reviewed its Out of Hours Operations prior to Storm Dennis. The rota was reviewed and updated based on the weather forecasts to try and ensure additional cover was available during the peak periods. During the weather event reactive steps were taken to bring additional unplanned resources as weather and calls necessitated. The table below summarises the staffing resources (planned and unplanned i.e. reactionary) utilised and the calls received during the weekend of Storm Dennis:

<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Calls Received</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Resources (staff rota'd)</b>	<b>Resources (additional staff)</b>





**RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

From	To	Calls Received	Comments	Resources (staff rota'd)	Resources (additional staff)
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> Feb 5pm	Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> Feb 9am	4		2 x resource 2pm – 10pm  1 x resource 10pm – 6am	1 x planned additional resource 5pm – 10pm
Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> Feb 9am	Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> Feb 9pm	137		2 x resource 6am – 2pm  2 x resource 2pm – 10pm	1 x planned additional resource 2pm – 10pm  1 x unplanned additional resource 6pm – 10pm
Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> Feb 9pm	Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> Feb 9am	9pm – 12am: 69  12am – 2am: 65  2am – 9am: 429  Total: 563	Met Office: Red warning for rain 6:10AM Sunday – request out to daytime staff to come in	1 x resource 10pm – 6am	1 x planned additional resource 10pm – 6am  3 x unplanned additional resources 2am – 12pm
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> Feb 9am	Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> Feb 9pm	754	Additional lines opened in contact centre 9am- 5pm with 9 additional staff responding to management request to come in	2 x resource 6am – 2pm  2 x resource 2pm – 10pm	9 x unplanned additional resources 9am – 5pm

From	To	Calls Received	Comments	Resources (staff rota'd)	Resources (additional staff)
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> Feb 9pm	Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> Feb 9am	60		1 x resource 10pm – 6am	2 x unplanned additional resource 10pm – 6am
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,518</b>			

- 5.7 Over the days running up to the projected storm, the Council issued regular messages and information to residents and businesses in line with the Council's Winter Weather Planning arrangements. In response to the change in the warning categories on Saturday and the early hours of Sunday morning, key information was published to assist the community response.
- 5.8 The communication with Members, residents and staffing teams during the height of the Storm was complicated by the issues experienced with the Council's website and full access to emails. Over the few months prior to Storm Dennis the ICT Service had been steadily transferring ICT functions and equipment from Bronwydd to the Rhondda Fach Data Centre and upgrading the capacity and capability of the ICT infrastructure to enable the Council and schools to become more digitally enabled. These changes had been undertaken in a controlled and measured manner and this approach had been very successful. The ICT team had planned the temporary shutdown of some ICT services over the February half term week, in order that the systems that support schools etc could be transferred. The Plan was for the servers and other infrastructure to be transferred Friday evening, the 14<sup>th</sup> February and installed and up and running by Saturday lunchtime. Everything went to plan except that there were unforeseen BT fibre issues and BT took time to respond. Once the BT issues had been resolved, Western Power Distribution had a power outage, as a result of the Tylorstown landslide, that compounded the issue and added to the delay in bringing services back on-line.
- 5.9 The plan to move the data servers, also had back up contingencies that could be deployed, so whilst the full functionality of the Council website was not available over the weekend of Storm Dennis, we could post emergency messages on the web page that were visible to all internet users, and we ensured the email systems remained in Bronwydd in order that these could be brought on line first. Based on the Met Office Yellow Warning information we had available on the Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020 from the Met Office, and the

fact that the change-over processes were well planned and the previous upgrades had been successful to date, the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, authorised officers to proceed with the changes.

- 5.10 Whilst, the fact that the emails were unavailable until Sunday evening was not ideal, the telephone and text communication between the Council teams responding to the emergency, rehousing people, working with NRW and the emergency services worked effectively.
- 5.11 With hindsight, this was the correct decision, as the changes to the ICT infrastructure have enabled the Council to move all its office-based staff and transactions on-line and facilitate home and agile working, a month later in response to the Covid 19 lockdown. To be clear, the IT system changes made before Storm Dennis had no material impact on the Council's response.

## **6 WHAT ACTION DID THE COUNCIL UNDERTAKE DURING THE STORM?**

- 6.1 During the night of Storm Dennis and through the early hours of Sunday morning, teams from across the Council responded to many requests for help from residents and where road and drainage infrastructure was damaged. The working conditions during the night were appalling, and recognition should be given to the staff who were out in extremely challenging and often dangerous conditions helping and assisting with the public and businesses in dealing immediately with the storm event.
- 6.2 Many roads and bridges to communities were impassable which created inherent difficulties in responding quickly to requests: for example, a 7.5 tonne lorry transporting sandbags was stuck in deep flood water on the A4059 and could not be recovered until almost 24 hours later. The commitment from all the staff that worked and were on-call that weekend was exceptional. The vast majority worked exceptionally long hours through Saturday night and all through Sunday to help all the communities and individuals that required support. It was not just over this weekend, with many key Highways, Streetcare and Drainage staff working exceptionally long hours to respond to the unique events of Storm Dennis. I am sure all Members value the commitment, effort and determination of the staff during this difficult period.
- 6.3 During the early hours of Sunday morning, it quickly became clear that the Council was facing a major incident and in response:

- Set up a command centre in Abercynon Depot to coordinate the Council's response to the Storm, where the majority of SLT officers and the Leader of the Council were based from the early hours. A satellite centre was also established in Dinas to deal with local flooding issues and staff were deployed to Tonypanydy Fire & Rescue Station as a direct link with South Wales Fire & Rescue Service;
- Set up four rest centres to support people forced from their homes by the floods;
- The Streetcare staff attended many flooding related issues to respond to requests for help and to assist in dealing with flooding damage to infrastructure, properties, cleaning of drains, repairs, etc but the total number of issues to deal with was exceptional;
- Housing and Environmental Health Officers visited flooded homes and the rest centres to offer temporary accommodation in local hotels or secure temporary accommodation;
- The emergency services, in particular South Wales Fire and Rescue Service responded to many incidents, to support the Council in evacuating homes and properties, such as in Nantgarw, where coaches were provided to take residents to the rest centre established at Llantrisant Leisure Centre;
- Corporate Estates staff also responded to requests for help, with their main focus on securing sites in the interest of public safety, such as retaining walls, damaged buildings etc;
- Engineers and Corporate Estates worked on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February assessing risks that had arisen from Storm Dennis, particularly in relation to Tylorstown Landslip, which was **monitored 24/7 in the aftermath of the landslip**. The mountain road above the slip was closed as it was impossible to assess whether this had been affected by the slip until a more detailed inspection could be undertaken. Specialist geotechnical engineers were consulted and began an inspection on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February.

6.4 In the past flooding has usually been limited to a relatively small area, and never to the extent that was experienced during Storm Dennis. Therefore, it took a while after the Storm has passed and even into Monday morning to fully understand the extent of the impact on homes and businesses and the Council's property and wider infrastructure and assets including the network infrastructure. Over the next few days, more families and businesses came forward requesting support and only then did the true extent of the suffering caused by the Storm become apparent.

## 7 WHAT ACTION DID THE COUNCIL TAKE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE STORM?

7.1 On Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020, the Council's Senior Officers met with the Leader to assess the situation and put in place a robust Flood Response to support homeowners and businesses to immediately begin the clean-up of their properties, to safely secure any infrastructure assets damaged by the flood, respond to the increasing concerns over Tylorstown Tip landslip, and supporting householders to secure alternative accommodation if required.

7.2 On Monday, the following actions were put in place:

- All the Highways, Streetcare, Parks and Drainage staff were immediately utilised on a major clean-up operation, this included revisiting all priority culverts to clear blockages, deploying gangs with 20 tonne lorries and JCB's to remove large amounts of flood debris from various locations across the County Borough. This included providing skips and collection services for damaged household items and for town centre businesses;
- Over and above the Council's dozen road sweepers and gully emptiers, an additional eight gully and street cleaning manned vehicles were provided by Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Flintshire Councils, for the first week which was a valuable resource in the clean-up. The Vale of Glamorgan also provided two drainage engineers to support the FRM Team;
- Five Streetcare crews were allocated to drainage repairs on 17<sup>th</sup> February and are still completing the high number of repairs across the County Borough. A list of all the work undertaken to date is set out in Appendix A;
- **A further 1,400 filled sandbags** were made available in the period immediately afterwards to replenish stock levels;
- We purchased **1,500 flood sacks** which inflate when in contact with water and are much quicker to deliver than traditional sandbags due to them being able to be carried in the Inspectors vans. These were offered as an immediate assistance to property owners when required;
- Additional pumping capacity was procured and leased, both to help the clean up but also for future significant flood events;
- The Council's engineers worked with the utility companies, and in particular Western Power Distribution, in disconnecting street lighting damaged by the floods;
- Inspections were immediately carried out on the highway network with bridges and roads being closed, with particular issues in rural lanes that have few or limited drainage systems;

- During the immediate week after Storm Dennis, Redstart geotechnical engineers were called upon to carry out inspections of other significant former colliery tips, where there appeared to have been some movement. Mott MacDonald Engineers were also utilised in particular in relation to a land slip above Clydach offices;
  - Inspections of all Category C and D Risk tips were undertaken by geotechnical engineers and this has continued throughout the period especially on D tips after a period of heavy rainfall;
  - There were several slips along the Maerdy Mountain Road. A contractor was immediately appointed and undertook extra drainage works on the Mountain;
  - A review of all the structure inspections was undertaken whilst maintaining the existing programme of work. Repairs continued to be prioritised and procured both directly and through Redstart engineers. One hundred and forty structures required repair or further review with investigations still ongoing. It is anticipated that the programme of repairs to structures damaged during Storm Dennis will take until 2022/23 to be completed;
  - The Council's Corporate Estate's maintenance team had contractors assisting business to safely reinstate power and gas supplies, and providing dehumidifiers;
  - Highway and surface water culverts across the County Borough were being surveyed for damage and those that were blocked by debris were being immediately cleared;
  - Council buildings that were damaged by the flood such as Ty Glantaf Depot, Ynysangharad Park including the Lido and other buildings, Pentre Home for the Elderly, Riverside Day Centre, and Treforest Learning Curve Day Centre were inspected and action taken to make the locations safe;
  - Monitored river walls at risk of collapse, and watched 24/7 Tylorstown Tip, and other key sites in the interests of public safety;
- 7.3 All the available Environmental Health and Housing Officers visited flooded communities and individual homes each day during the first week, with many residents receiving repeat visits. The officers provided advice and offers to households to be rehoused if they wished, health advice on safely cleaning the home, and the officers recorded all the respective resident's details which were essential for the Flood Hardship Grant payments.
- 7.4 During the first week, we provided temporary accommodation to 37 households (90 people, including children), the majority of which quickly left the temporary accommodation having been supported to move on to 6-month tenancies in alternative homes. The majority of the households were funded by their

insurance companies and the Council supported the remainder through Housing Benefits or other financial support.

- 7.5 It also became apparent that for some residents, which were flooded, their mental health needs were significant and contact was made on their behalf with the Community Psychiatric Nurses and or family and friends to offer additional support. As new intelligence was received throughout the day, during Monday and Tuesday, on properties affected by the floods, officers were directed to these areas to offer advice and assistance. This included meeting with the local Member in Trehafod to visit residents of Fountain Terrace who had advised of water penetration to their homes and to explore the need for possible temporary accommodation.
- 7.6 In respect of the response to Pontypridd Town Centre and Treforest Industrial Estate businesses, on the Monday morning, approximately forty staff from the Prosperity and Development Service were redirected from normal duties to visit either the Town Centre or Industrial Estate with a focus on business support. Staff were deployed with the objective of engaging with as many affected businesses as possible and having a visible presence within the town and estate. Officers engaged with businesses owners, sometimes in distressing circumstances, listened to their concerns and were then able to coordinate the required support. In Pontypridd 12 skips were placed around the town for businesses to remove damaged goods and furniture, abandoned cars were removed, electrical contractors made safe and reconnected electric supplies, staff coordinated the safe access of contractors into the town and street cleaners started to remove the flood debris.
- 7.7 This was followed up with visits to businesses in Pentre, Cwmbach and Mountain Ash on Tuesday, providing similar levels of support. Immediate feedback from the retail/town centre community towards the Council was positive, with a number of comments on social media that evening including, *“The Council have been fantastic and so supportive”*. A later survey of businesses by ‘The Means’ consultants found that ‘the council’s reputation has largely been enhanced as a result of the actions it has taken ...in response to Storm Denis ... Comments included *“exceptional work”* and *“the council had a strong vision of what needed to be done and delivered on their promises”*.
- 7.8 On Tuesday afternoon, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020, the first Flood Recovery Board met, chaired by the Leader of the Council, which included the Deputy Leader, Cllr Crimmings and Cllr Norris, which was to become the Major Incident Recovery Board, meeting twice weekly. The Recovery Board included representation





from NRW, the Police, representatives of Pontypridd BID, Pontypridd Town Council, business representatives from Treforest Industrial Estate, Citizen’s Advice and a range of Council officers.

7.9 Immediately, the Board considered and agreed to proposals to provide a Financial Support package for Residents and Businesses. At the time it was estimated that over 530 homes and at least 300 businesses had been affected by the flood waters and in response the Council Leader established a Community Flood Recovery Grant – Hardship Payment, which made £500 available to each home and £1,000 to small and medium sized enterprises affected to help deal with the initial impact of internal flooding.

7.10 An online form to apply for the Hardship Payment was developed and made available to the public on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and face to face drop-in sessions were organised in the respective communities to provide the financial grant. Environmental Health officers attended the drop-in sessions as well and provided public health information to assist householders cleaning and decontaminating their homes and belongings. To access the grant, all the homes were also visited during the short space of time by the Housing Team from the Council’s Public Health and Protection Service. Senior officers, Transactional Services Teams along with the Communities for Work Team attended the following community centres with cheques already available to residents who had been impacted (which could be alternatively replaced with a BACS transfer, which most residents opted for).

<b>Monday</b> <b>24<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>	<b>Tuesday</b> <b>25<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>	<b>Thursday</b> <b>27<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>	<b>Friday</b> <b>28<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>
Canolfan Pentre Pentre 9.30am – 5pm	Trallwng Community Centre 9.30am – 5pm	Canolfan Pennar Mountain Ash 9.30am – 5pm	Coleg y Cymoedd Nantgarw 9.30am – 4pm
Trehafod Village Hall 1pm – 5pm	Trehafod Village Hall 9.30am – 5pm	Taffs Well Hub 9.30am – 5pm	



- 7.11 The face to face sessions with residents were much appreciated, with many wanting to share their experiences and staff provided practical support such as obtaining bank details to provide a faster and more secure payment process than postal cheques, especially as many residents had temporarily moved out of their homes. The first Residential Flood Hardship Grants were paid directly into residents' bank accounts on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020. We also provided Uniform Grant support for those school age children who were flooded and who required support.
- 7.12 Over the course of the initial recovery period, **803 residential households** received the £500 Council flood support, amounting to **£401,500**. A further **326 uniform grants**, amounting to **£32,600** were paid. In addition, the Council also administered and paid Flood Hardship Grants to residents on behalf of Welsh Government amounting to £565,000. Accountancy Teams contacted residents to establish whether they had household insurance, as the basis of WG support was £1,000 for uninsured homes and £500 for insured homes. Further payments were also made by the Council's Transactional Services Team to residents, on behalf of MPs/AMs/Cllrs from local flood relief donations. This was a considerable logistical challenge which the teams across the Council worked well together to deliver.
- 7.13 A similar approach was adopted for small and medium sized businesses that were also flooded. An online claim form was made available and the Prosperity & Development Team visited local businesses to obtain necessary bank details and validate potential claims, also providing advice and guidance. Meetings were held with businesses to discuss queries around criteria, particularly those businesses that work from home. A total of **226 businesses** received the £1,000 business flood relief support payments, amounting to **£226,000**.
- 7.14 The Council's website and Contact Centre was also providing support during the period. The table below sets out the types and numbers of requests for help and support.

<b>Support Requested</b>	<b>Number of requests</b>
Hardship Support Grant	1,402
Special Collection	700
Replacement wheelie/food bin	415
Housing Assistance	283

<b>Support Requested</b>	<b>Number of requests</b>
Assistance with Repairs	119
Assistance with Insurance Claims	72
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,991</b>

7.15 During the first week following the Storm, the Council's focus was on the practical issues that the Council does best that were driven by services. For example, homeless households were rehoused, support was provided to clear up homes and businesses, the flood debris was removed, culverts and other water courses were cleared, etc but we were less focused on the other issues that arise from having your home flooded, such as access to food, cleaning materials, infection control and hygiene, and other practical issues.

**7.16 As a Council, we were therefore very grateful for the speed in which local communities responded, often led by the local elected Member, usually via the local community centre or other community venue. We would like to pay a particular thank you to the following community centres and the volunteers that provided invaluable support to many individuals and families:**

- **Canolfan Pentre;**
- **Taff's Well Rugby Club;**
- **Taff's Well Village Hall;**
- **Trallwn Community Centre;**
- **Treforest Community Centre;**
- **Trehafod Hall;**
- **Salvation Army, Pentre;**
- **St. Catherine's Church, Pontypridd.**

7.17 We recognise that we need to revise and strengthen arrangements for community support in our emergency planning procedures. However, the following section of the report sets out how we recognised this weakness and how we have addressed it. This is reflected in the way in which we supported hundreds of people that were shielding or vulnerable during the first Covid19 lockdown over Easter and early summer.

7.18 The focus of services through the Storm, and Sunday and Monday was to respond to the emergency. During this period, we were still uncertain as to the extent of the damage caused and we had a very mixed picture in respect of the

size of the issues and the problems faced. Therefore, it was very difficult to provide an accurate picture of the position and report this via media and social media channels to the public and to elected members. Understandably, some members felt that they did not have sufficient information to understand the impact on their ward and were uncertain of the range of action being undertaken by the Council.

- 7.19 We recognise and appreciate that elected members wanted a better grasp of the situation, but senior officers were for the first two days also struggling to get a clear position of all the issues due to the sheer scale of the event and the number of individual areas flooded. They also had to focus on further challenges such as the landslip at Tylorstown.
- 7.20 One of the biggest lessons for the Council's officers in responding to the major emergency is the need for a suitably staffed and resourced Control Room with accurate, and up to date information being available as telephone calls are logged, and as other various information sources provide details on homes and businesses. This will require the provision of better digital equipment to allow staff on the ground to input information there and then to inform management data dashboards.
- 7.21 Having access to this comprehensive information, enables faster decision making but also the opportunity to provide more timely information and updates to elected Members, specific communities affected and the wider public. We are also developing a system to provide instant messaging to elected Members such as Text Messages or put in place an elected Members Emergency/Essential Information WhatsApp, that quickly updates Members and directs them to further data sources for their information and use. We would also seek to bring together, physically or virtually the Council's Communications Team into the Control Room, so that necessary information can be quickly communicated to elected Members and the general public as appropriate.
- 7.22 Progress has already been made in establishing the Control Centre, based in Ty Elai, which has its own power backup generator, a backup network provision (including WiFi), and access to CCTV pictures from across the County Borough. The drainage, river and key highway network will also become connected to this Control Centre over the coming months, to monitor potential emergency events, to have better access to data and other information to help inform decision making and to also better inform others, including elected Members.

## **8 WHAT ACTION DID THE COUNCIL TAKE IN THE DAYS AND WEEKS FOLLOWING THE STORM?**

8.1 The public response to the flooding across the County Borough, was overwhelming with offers of help and support from businesses, supplies of food and other goods from UK supermarket chains, and the many individual volunteers and community groups that offered their time to the Council to help in the clear up and to support those families affected by the floods.

8.2 Coordinating and managing all these offers of help and support and identifying the best way to use the volunteers in a safe manner was a very new experience to the Council and our staff. The Council's Public Health, Protection & Community Services teams took on this responsibility and quickly established:

- A food and goods collection and distribution network;
- Food parcels and non-food donations;
- The coordination of volunteers.

**8.3 Collection and Distribution network** - A plan was implemented to coordinate the collection of food donations, and to ensure the preparation and re-distribution of food parcels for individuals and families affected by Storm Dennis. The following buildings were identified as collection points for donations by the public:

- Council offices at Ty Elai and Ty Trevithick;
- Canolfan Pennar;
- Libraries;
- Leisure Centres.

8.4 Local and national businesses, including supermarkets, made large scale donations of food and other items. Non-perishable/long-life food items were delivered to the Food Distribution Unit at Tonypany, perishable food items offered by Council suppliers being diverted to local community centres that were supporting residents, and non-food items were stored at a unit in Clydach Vale and re-distributed from there to the following community centres that played an invaluable role in supporting the delivery of food and supplies;

- Canolfan Pentre;
- Taff's Well Rugby Club;
- Taff's Well Village Hall;
- Trallwn Community Centre;
- Treforest Community Centre;



- Trehafod Hall;
  - Salvation Army, Pentre;
  - St. Catherine's Church, Pontypridd.
- 8.5 We also sought to support these community centres in a variety of ways for example, food and other personal and household items were provided to meet any needs identified, PPE was purchased for volunteers involved in the clearing-up, and community development officers were allocated to support centres on-site in response to requests by some centres.
- 8.6 **It was recognised that allocating a named contact to each Community Centre at the outset of the major incident would have been beneficial. Community development officers were allocated to Canolfan Pentre, Trehafod Hall, Trallwn Community Centre and Taff's Well Village Hall.** This will be taken into account in the planning for future emergencies.
- 8.7 **Food Parcels and Non-Food Donations** - Food parcels were tailored to meet the needs of families both in respect of the number of people to be provided for and also to reflect the needs of families who were in temporary accommodation with limited access to cooking facilities. Where required kettles, toasters and microwaves donated by supermarkets and the public were provided to those who needed them. Six vans and twelve staff from the Highways Enforcement teams, plus resource from Libraries and Leisure Services were made available to ensure that families in need received their food parcels. In total 910 families received a food parcel. (52 affected households indicated they did not require one). The deliveries took place over a fortnight concluding on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020.
- 8.8 The collection and distribution of food parcels during Storm Dennis was achieved due to the collaboration between a range of Council services and staff, in partnership with community organisations, volunteers and businesses. This partnership approach has been harnessed more recently in the County's response to Covid 19.
- 8.9 Significant donations of non-food items including clothes, cleaning items and small electrical appliances were received. For example, one supermarket donated over 75 new microwaves, 200 kettles and toasters. These were stored at Clydach and delivered to those identified by Council services as being in need. Cleaning items and personal hygiene items were placed in libraries for use by affected residents and/or provided to community centres that identified they were running short of supplies to support residents.

- 8.10 The Council worked with Too Good To Waste to facilitate the processing of large items of furniture and white goods (and ensuring these met required Health and Safety standards) for those who had lost possessions during the floods. It should be noted that any non-food items remaining after the flood were given to local RCT charities or used to provide home starter packs for people moving into new accommodation and any residual food items were used to support shielding and vulnerable people during the Covid19 pandemic.
- 8.11 **The Coordination of Volunteers** - The Community Development Team coordinated the effort to deploy individual volunteers to where they were of most value. Eighty-seven calls came via the RCTCBC helpline immediately from individual community members. However, the safeguarding issues were too high to utilise these volunteers to assist households. Each of the individuals were contacted later and thirty-five were used to support activities at Trallwn Community Centre, Tonypany Food Distribution Unit, Clydach Donation Centre and Tesco, Aberdare. Coordination of volunteers was a new development for the Council and lessons were learned from this experience that has served the Council well during Covid 19 lockdown. During this period we coordinated a range of volunteering support to individuals, ensured DBS checks were in place and made use of a specifically designed App to communicate, engage and coordinate the volunteers.
- 8.12 Other key organisations worked with the Council to provide specific support, and we are very grateful for their invaluable help and assistance, in particular:
- Citizen's Advice and a range of Council services visited affected communities using our Mobile libraries so that any residents could receive support locally, for example Citizens Advice provided advice on insurance claims, uninsured losses and access to financial support;
  - A number of private businesses donated staff time, vehicles and equipment to help with the clean-up. Large teams were deployed from Persimmon Homes, Llanmoor Homes, CMB Pipe Fitters, GEs and Transport for Wales. These worked alongside the Waste and Streetcare teams for days, in many communities, supporting the clean-up operations. Their deployment was coordinated by Public Health and Protection staff;
  - Job Centre Plus delivered benefit advice to people in communities – confirming that any Hardship Payments would not affect benefits. Information was disseminated to Neighbourhood networks;
  - Interlink released a small fund for Community Groups who wished to support the flood response to apply (up to £250.00 for extra costs per group). This



information was widely distributed by the Community Development team to Neighbourhood Networks.

- 8.13 In the immediate aftermath of the flooding, the Housing Grants and Strategy team working with Housing Advice colleagues reviewed and re-organised budgets to allow for financial support to ensure they could return quickly to their homes be offered to vulnerable residents that had been affected by the floods. An opportunity to merge underspend in other grants was identified to create a new **Emergency Flood Recovery Grant (EFR)** targeted at our most vulnerable residents.
- 8.14 In terms of process, the Grant was accessed the same way in which a Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) is accessed, through a very simple referral process. Referrals were completed by the Housing Advice team, who were delivering face to face support to those vulnerable residents whose homes had been affected by the floods and who had already received the hardship grant of £500. As these grant recipients were some our most vulnerable residents, we worked in partnership with Care and Repair, who agreed that they would offer a handholding service where possible. Twenty-four referrals were received, twenty one were approved and the work completed at a cost of £47,201. The Housing Strategy team also signposted residents (regardless of grant eligibility) to the Council's Community Support team to access donated items which were available to anybody affected by the floods, such as microwaves, kettles and toasters.
- 8.15 The process has worked very well due to the robust processes that already exist within the Housing Grants team as well as the collaborative working between the Housing Grants, Housing Strategy and Housing Advice teams. Residents who have accessed the grant have been able to get back into their homes and out of temporary accommodation, which has been essential especially with the Covid-19 outbreak and the need for people to self-isolate.
- 8.16 After the Council's initial clean up response to the storm, significant work continued in order to inspect and assess the damage caused to the County Borough's infrastructure. In the aftermath of Storm Dennis and Storm Jorge that followed it, the Highways Inspection Policy was suspended for the resources to be utilised assisting reactive works and drainage inspections. A comprehensive review of the network was subsequently undertaken and significant works delivered to repair storm damaged areas in mainly rural locations.



- 8.17 Full inspections of bridges, major culverts and major river retaining walls were undertaken in the two to three weeks after Storm Dennis, staffed by two teams of Council Engineers and two teams of Redstart engineers. **Over 350 bridges, walls and culverts were inspected.** Several bridges were closed including Berw Road Bridge (White Bridge) in Pontypridd, Castle Inn Footbridge, Treforest and Ynysangharad Park Footbridge, Pontypridd. Several walls had collapsed requiring traffic signal control including Hopkinstown Wall, Berw Road, Sion Street, Cardiff Road (adjacent to Castle Inn), Blaen y Cwm Road, Blaencwm, Brook Street, Pontypridd and a number of others. Significant work has also been completed to clear culverts blocked with debris including Nant Gelliwion Bridge and Campbell Terrace, Mountain Ash.
- 8.18 Within a month of Storm Dennis, the UK was locked down as part of the UK Government's response to the Coronavirus Pandemic. This significantly hampered the opportunity to undertake significant repair work to the highways infrastructure in residential areas, due to the exceptionally high number of parked cars and other vehicles on the highway. Whilst the drainage gangs in the depots, and their contractors, undertook significant cleansing and repair of road gullies and gully connections where access was available, a comprehensive street by street exercise involving letter drops, door knocking, removal of parked vehicles, etc was not undertaken until after the first UK wide Coronavirus lockdown was relaxed in June 2020.
- 8.19 This had a similar impact on our highways; carriageways and footways, recovery programme was targeted at more rural areas through the first lockdown. The value of such works to the Council's rural highway network, undertaken to date, is in excess of £550k with over 5 miles of highway repaired, these repairs have mainly consisted of traditional carriageway replacement due to significant surface water erosion, with localised ditching and drainage works incorporated.
- 8.20 There are further areas of the Council's rural network compromised by storm damage and it is the intention to target these in the coming months. The programmed works for the next four months, to Spring 2021, are estimated to be £350k, with a further £300k of work to be completed in the summer. These works will improve the condition and safeguard the future of a further 4.5 miles of the highway network.
- 8.21 One of the areas that has been strengthened is the degree of coordination and mutual support between the flood risk management authorities. In response to flood warnings during and after Storm Dennis, the Council, NRW and DCWW



have worked together, shared knowledge and resources and agreed lead roles and responsibilities. For example;

- The Council, NRW and DCWW have coordinated deployment of pumps to meet specific needs, particularly around Pentre, during Storm Dennis and also in preparation for other storm warnings;
- The Council has led on delivery of the new headwall and inlet arrangements for the NRW owned culvert inlet at Pentre which failed, funded by WG secured by the Council and part funded by NRW;
- The Council has quickly rebuilt numerous flood assets along rivers;
- DCWW has facilitated an overflow arrangement from the highway drainage system in Lewis Street, Pentre to the DCWW sewers to improve the resilience of the highway system in Lewis Street, funded by WG grants secured by the Council;
- DCWW has reconfigured manholes at Treorchy to enable highway flows to be dealt with more efficiently. This will make the highway system more resilient and will alleviate the build-up of silt and reduce a maintenance liability;
- NRW, DCWW and the Council have established a project board to oversee strategic flood prevention measures in some of our highest risk communities;
- The Council and DCWW are working together to map integrated infrastructure to identify where systems can be modified to reduce flood risk, particularly with respect to highway drainage, combined systems and pump stations.

8.22 There is more that can be done at a strategic level with our partners and every avenue of improvement will need to be explored to ensure the best outcomes for our communities and businesses in future storm events.

8.23 The range and extent of the remedial works being undertaken by the Council's engineers over the period since the Storm is significant, which has been in addition to the planned maintenance and capital programme:

- Approximately 47km of ordinary watercourses (culverted and open) and surface water drainage infrastructure has been surveyed to date;
- Approximately 1,300 tonnes of debris has been removed from within culverted and open channel ordinary watercourses;
- Emergency repairs have been identified at 26 locations with 19 locations completed to date which range from culvert repairs (replacing collapses),

repairing scoured channels, rebuilding manholes and removing accumulated debris;

- The Flood Risk Management team is currently coordinating the delivery of 28 investigation reports into the mechanism of flooding within key areas affected by Storm Dennis, Jorge and the extreme thunderstorms in June. They will also be developing a further 19 Section 19 flood investigation reports which require publication under Section 19 of the FWMA 2010;
- Up to the end of September over 6,000 hours of officer time has been spent on Storm Dennis recovery; that is the equivalent of 6 engineers working full time. The planned programme of works has also been ongoing with major schemes also taking place. Some footbridge schemes have been delayed as resources were allocated to Storm Dennis;
- Highway Term Maintenance Contract – Hammonds Civil Engineering Contractors have been used for many of the wall repairs. This has proved an effective and efficient means of procurement;
- Specialist Contractors coordinated and appointed – the nature of the Storm Dennis defects has required contractors that specialise in underwater/confined space repairs;
- Tips (A-D risk classification) – Four contractors have been appointed to improve the stability of the high-risk tips. A number of the tips have had their remedial works completed;
- Specialist Demolition – Feeder Pipe Bridge required removing prior to the winter season due to risk to the bridge been further destabilised. A demolition company experienced in difficult demolitions were employed and safely removed the bridge;
- Ynysangharad Park Footbridge repair has been designed and is currently being repaired and due to be open in Feb 2021;
- Maerdy Mountain Landslip – external consultants procured to identify additional remedial works.

8.24 A major issue the Council has had to address was the significant landslide in Tylorstown where 60,000 tonnes of former colliery spoil slide into the Rhondda Fach River. The overwhelming concern was that the rest of the remaining spoil was unstable and could potentially result in a major incident resulting in flooding and a potential loss of life. In response, a team of Council engineers maintained a 24/7 presence on site for a number of weeks. Subsequently, the procured contractor to stabilise the site was appointed and they were able to drain the high-water levels on the site that reduced the risk of further spoil movement. An Emergency Plan was developed with all the emergency services and other agencies to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated response in the event that a further landslide occurred.

- 8.25 Further work has progressed on remediating the landslide, all being carried out during the Covid lockdown period. The Phase 1 that installed emergency surface water drainage on the hillside in Tylorstown commenced within days of the Storm and was completed within weeks (April 2020). Over the following weeks, the Council's engineers working with consultants and contractors experienced in the field of tip reclamation, developed a remediation strategy and safe methods of working that would enable works to commence to safely remove the 60,000 tonnes of slip material from the valley floor and reduce the significant risk of blockage of the river. The agreed engineering solution has 3 phases, Phase 1 having already been completed. Phases 2 and 3 are on-going and remove the spoil from the river and continue as emergency work.
- 8.26 A further phase; Phase 4, involves removing the residual tip material which still sits on the hillside above the river. This work is progressing through the rigorous statutory approvals process and, subject to such approvals, will commence late summer 2021. There is an ongoing risk that this material will slip and potentially block the watercourse but the Phase 1 drainage scheme, the Phase 2 & 3 removal of the existing slip material from the valley floor and ongoing monitoring will significantly reduce and mitigate this risk. An emergency plan is in place to respond to and manage a potential incident.
- 8.27 In terms of the support provided to local businesses, in the first few weeks, the Council provided:
- Thirty-five skips throughout Pontypridd Town Centre;
  - Six domestic style heaters and two dehumidifiers to be loaned to businesses in order to assist with the drying out of properties affected by the flooding;
  - Provided advice and support in respect of available office space to flooded businesses and the team directed affected businesses to the owners of temporary accommodation where required/appropriate;
  - More than 80 retail businesses were visited and 38 local independent businesses received emergency flood assistance grants.
- 8.28 In respect of Treforest Industrial Estate and Nantgarw, 110 businesses had contacted the Council seeking advice and support. In response we set up a multi-agency drop-in session for local businesses with Business Wales, Development Bank of Wales and Welsh Government's Regional Economic Team all available to provide advice and support. The first session was held in Coleg-Y-Cymoedd on Monday 24 February where support was available for businesses to complete the emergency funding application, advice on insurance and opportunities to access loan funding through the Development Bank of Wales. Over 40 businesses attended. Council officers were also

deployed out on site to meet with businesses directly to ensure that all affected were made aware of the support available. A further drop-in session for businesses was held at Coleg-Y-Cymoedd, the following day. As a result 85 businesses in the area have received grant support. The team also coordinated the delivery of a further 14 skips to some smaller businesses affected in the Treforest / Nantgarw area.

8.29 In September, Cabinet approved a report from the Director of Prosperity & Development which recommended a restructure of the current Regeneration Grants Programme and allowed for the creation of a Flood Resilience Grant to provide targeted support for businesses in Town Centres who were severely impacted by the significant flooding caused as a result of Storm Dennis. The grant will support the implementation of anti-flood measures which will improve business resilience to deal with any such potential weather events in the future. The grant has recently opened for applicants and businesses have already started to apply.

8.30 In recent weeks, the Prosperity & Development Service has been exploring the impact the flooding on Treforest Industrial Estate has had on businesses' insurance premiums. To understand the extent of the issue, we undertook a survey of all affected businesses on the estate and received 35 questionnaire responses and the results are summarised below. The main purpose of the questionnaire was to find out about any difficulties business were now experiencing obtaining insurance, particularly for flood insurance provision. The results of the main question asked: *How has your business insurance been affected by the flooding?* is summarised below:

<b>Response</b>	<b>No of businesses</b>
No Change	5
Some increase	5
Major Increase	13
Unsustainable Increase	6
Not able to get insurance at all	6

8.31 As a result, meetings are taking place between senior managers in the Council, key business owners on the estate and world leading insurance experts to explore solutions to obtaining suitable and affordable insurance cover going forward. Officers from the Service are also assisting some businesses with

finding space to relocate key stock if a major flood warning was issued in the future.

## **9 WHAT IS THE COUNCIL'S LONGER-TERM RESPONSE TO REPAIRING, REPLACING DAMAGED INFRASTRUCTURE AND PREVENTING FUTURE FLOODING EVENTS?**

9.1 The total cost of repairing or replacing all the damaged infrastructure, caused by Storm Dennis is estimated to cost in excess of £91m including the cost to make safe the former tip in Tylorstown. The Council is currently using its capital programme funding to undertake the necessary repairs of highways and drainage infrastructure, supported by Welsh Government grants and other funding applications.

9.2 This section of the report evidences that:

- A number of the bridge and retaining walls repairs have already been actioned;
- Consultants have been procured and are progressing with a number of designs for repairs to bridges, retaining walls, landslips and other infrastructure assets;
- The full costs on repairs to structures have not been finalised as the results of the inspections are still being evaluated and it is expected that the costs will dramatically increase;
- Our total estimate for repairing flood damage to our civils infrastructure remains at £70m (excluding tips). The Council has made a commitment to date to fund Highway Structures and landslips of circa £2.4million, and it is estimated that the overall spend on the Highway Structures and landslips will be in excess of £91 million

9.3 In respect of the tips, the scenes at Tylorstown that were so vividly captured on social media have reverberated across the communities of South Wales. The Council is heavily involved in work that is being undertaken by Welsh Government in conjunction with the UK Government and the Coal Authority. This work is moving at pace to: understand the scale of the problem; develop a definitive data base of all tips and their ownership; understand the level of risk and to establish a common assessment framework; review whether legislation is fit for purpose; and ultimately to establish a strategy for the future that provides the public and the various tiers of government that ongoing risks are acceptable and restoring public confidence. The legal framework is being reviewed by the Law Commission and this is important as many of our tips are in private ownership.

- 9.4 In the interim, the Council continues to monitor all our tips and our inspection regime has been enhanced by further support from the Coal Authority. Our risk framework is being adopted as the common framework across all coal tips and we are delivering of the order of £600k of works to Council owned tips to ensure ditches, headwalls, culverts, etc operate as designed.
- 9.5 In terms of the Council's own buildings that were damaged by the flood, the Council has already made good progress in repairing these facilities, including key sites such as Pontypridd Lido and other sporting facilities in Ynysangharad Park. The plan is to open these facilities in 2021, subject to any Coronavirus restrictions
- 9.6 Following Storm Dennis, the Flood Risk Management (FRM) team have reviewed the County Borough, identified those areas most liable to flooding and have considered how we can manage the risk of surface water, ordinary watercourses and groundwater flooding going forward through the identification of 'Strategic Flood Risk Areas' (SFRA) of which there are 12 within RCT. These boundaries are intended to sub divide the County Borough into strategic boundaries for better analysis of the wider flood risk and prioritisation based on local and national flood risk.
- 9.7 To develop the SFRA, the Council has commissioned a Pilot Program Business Case for the Upper Rhondda boundary which will be used to review the actual flooding against the perceived modelled flooding forecasts and provide an estimate of the damage associated to the area and the high level options for managing the pluvial (non-river) flood risk. The FRM team has also commissioned a further pilot study focused around the practicalities of utilising Property Flood Resilience (PFR) Measures and how they could be deployed within those communities at a high risk of flooding. This project will take into account the limitations and risk of PFR measures and also the opportunities.
- 9.8 The Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy is due for review and update following the publication on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020 of the Welsh Government's National Strategy for Flooding and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM). This review will have to be undertaken with neighbouring local authorities, NRW and other bodies such as Dwr Cymru. Nevertheless, a number of capital schemes being developed in partnership with NRW and Dwr Cymru are being accelerated for delivery. The plan is to deliver 58 projects over the next 2-3 years, with 7 having been completed to date.

- 9.9 To assist in the development of robust flooding infrastructure, surveys are ongoing to ascertain the structural and serviceable condition of below ground infrastructure to identify the need for remedial works in some areas and opportunities to increase and improve the structures in other areas. This exercise will bring forward a proposed infrastructure work programme for prioritisation as part of the Council's capital programme and to form part of funding bids to Welsh Government.
- 9.10 The FRM team is also engaged in the ongoing development of the Sustainable Drainage Systems through the SuDs approval body (SAB) to ensure the standards are being adhered to by developers on new developments and surface water flood risk is alleviated.
- 9.11 Over the period since Storm Dennis, the FRM team has been working on a number of immediate responses to address infrastructure repairs and also develop and design major schemes. The first table below sets out the short-term schemes.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Number of Projects</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Emergency Repairs.	26	19
Flood Risk Management - Major Schemes	11	0
Flood Risk Management - Small Schemes (2020/21)	23	5
Flood Risk Management - Small Schemes advanced preparation (2021/22)	8	0
Resilient Road 2020/21	16	2
<b>Total Projects</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>26</b>



9.12 The following table sets out some of the major flood alleviation schemes being developed, with timetables for completion of the works in 2023 at the latest.

Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Estimated Value
Nant Gwawr (Phase 2)	Flood Alleviation Scheme	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 62 properties.	Not Known
Oaklands Terrace, Clifynydd	Flood Alleviation Scheme	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 78 properties	Not Known
Park Lane Aberdare	Flood Alleviation Scheme using overland flow and natural attenuation areas.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 31 properties	£530,000
Cwmbach, Canal Rd	Flood Alleviation Scheme using overland flow and flood routing to increase capacity in existing system.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 69 properties	£450,000
Treorchy FAS - (Phase 1) Cemetery Road	Flood Alleviation Scheme. Phase 1 - diversion/upgrade of culverted watercourse	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 236 properties	£750,000+
Treorchy FAS - (Phase 2) - Column Street	Flood Alleviation Scheme	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 236 properties	£1,000,000+
Cwmaman Phase 2	Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 2 - Reduction in peak flows through upper catchment management and traditional methods	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 60+ properties	£550,000
Glenboi Road – Mt Ash	Options to manage the highway drainage and exceedance flows from the ordinary watercourse.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 24 properties	£800,000
Pentre Flood Alleviation Scheme	Flood Alleviation Scheme	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 400 properties	£3,000,000+
Nant Frwd Culvert – Flood Routing	Flood Alleviation Scheme	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 18 properties	£300,000
Abercwmboi – Upper Bronallt Terrace Catchment	Instillation of an enlarged debris control structure and channel armouring. Within the Upper Culverted ordinary watercourse Inlet area including flood water storage areas.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 30+ properties	£250,000



- 9.13 Further detail on all the schemes is set out in Appendix A.
- 9.14 An analysis of the £13m invested in recent years in flood prevention schemes is set out in Appendix B.

## **10 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

10.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is currently in the process of scrutinising the events of Storm Dennis and the Council's response to this extreme weather event. The Scrutiny Committee will formalise its report in the coming months as all the available evidence and information becomes available. To support Cabinet's review of the Council's response to Storm Dennis, the Scrutiny Committee has provided the information they have collated to date and their initial common themes emerging from their review. At the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020, the Committee agreed to submit the information set out in Appendix C to this report.

10.2 A summary of the information in Appendix C is as follows:

- **Overall, there was much praise for the response to the February flooding** from the emergency services, community volunteers, neighbours and Council staff;
- **Members recognise the huge effort of staff and the mobilisation of resources to respond to these unprecedented weather events.** Many contributions recognise the swift response of the Council on the ground to support communities in the aftermath of the storm;
- **The swift recovery response of the Council** – members recognised the recovery arrangements and support made available to residents and businesses and the swift way in which they were made deployed in challenging circumstances. The continued support made available to support residents and local members over the last nine months has also been acknowledged.
- **Members highlighted a number of areas where further work is needed and improvements could be made** including communication with Elected Members and facilitating a better understanding of the Council emergency response procedures;
- **NRW has already identified the need to develop more precise forecasting and early warning procedures** to give communities time to respond. This was identified as a key ask by the Committee. (with the added caveat that there is a need to be as realistic as possible to identify major events);

- **Members acknowledged that Storm Dennis was significant and its impact felt county wide.** It was declared a major weather incident by South Wales Police and under these circumstances it was recognised that flooding cannot always be prevented. However, Members did feel that the risk can be managed and actions can be taken to minimise the harm caused by flooding as far as possible;
- **The Scrutiny process has already identified the importance of training for Elected Members, particularly newly Elected Members,** to identify roles and responsibilities in the case of flooding emergencies in addition to being able to signpost residents.
- **The capacity and capability of the current flood water infrastructure to cope with extreme weather events** – Members noted that much of the infrastructure was built to deal with 1:100 year flood events, however, these measurements have significantly changed in recent years. Communities need confidence that the Council, NRW and Dwr Cymru will invest to ensure that new and existing infrastructure will be future proofed to deal with more frequent extreme events;
- **The management of forestry, the mountainsides and private land** – a number of the flood events appear to have been caused by the way in which NRW has managed its commercial forestry business, clearing hillsides of trees and leaving natural debris on the hillside, which has found itself in blocked culverts on the valley floor;
- **The first few days in the aftermath of Storm Dennis – communication with local elected members** - a number of members have referred to the immediate aftermath of the storm and being able to access information on the action of the Council to respond in their respective community;
- **The human impact of the Storm in terms of individual's mental health and well-being** – inevitably the experience of having your home flooded, destroying your personal effects and possessions and the impact that has on your confidence of feeling safe and secure at home is considerable. We need to understand the long-term effects of this and ensure support is available;
- **What is Wales' long-term response to Climate Change? – Are public bodies doing enough and at a sufficient pace to tackle this issue to protect future generations?** – National targets have been set and progress has been made to reduce our reliance on carbon fuels but not at the pace required to prevent future extreme weather events becoming even more prevalent and damaging.

10.3 The Scrutiny Committee also acknowledged the pressure placed upon emergency services and other public agencies in responding to such a

significant event. Members appreciate their response, recognising that all agencies were initially overwhelmed by the severity of the weather and the geographical spread of the impact.

- 10.4 The Scrutiny Committee has yet to complete its review into the events of Storm Dennis, and this Cabinet report could form part of the evidence basis of the Scrutiny review, along with the S19 Flood Investigation Reports due to be completed in the new year. The observations, findings and recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee review will be presented and considered by Cabinet in due course.

## **11 LESSONS LEARNT & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

- 11.1 This report outlines a comprehensive response by the Council to the events of Storm Dennis, when many local elected Members, Cabinet Members, managers and staff worked above and beyond their duties to support individuals, families and communities impacted by the extreme weather event. Whatever planning and preparation had been undertaken by the Council and other agencies prior to Storm Dennis, no action could have prevented the unprecedented levels of rainfall and such high river levels.
- 11.2 It is also very unlikely to be the only extreme weather event we experience in the near future, as the UK climate becomes significantly wetter, warmer and unpredictable as a result of climate change.
- 11.3 We were very fortunate that the worst of Storm Dennis occurred in the early hours of the morning and not at rush hour on a busy working day otherwise there would probably have been casualties due to the force of the water in locations such as Treforest, Nantgarw and Pontypridd.
- 11.4 We cannot wait until an extreme weather event causes significant casualties before we all seriously focus on the environmental issues we face. Addressing the causes of Climate Change is essential and as a Council we are actively tackling our carbon footprint. We have made good progress when compared to the majority of the public and private sectors in Wales. However, we and the rest of society need to take greater action and at a faster pace if we are to slow down the rise in temperature of Earth. To achieve this requires international and national leadership and a global political commitment that we have yet to see.
- 11.5 As a Council, we will have little influence to change international politics but we can commit to an Environmental Strategy that not only considers how we

eliminate our carbon footprint but also tackles other issues such as air quality, managing the environment and alleviate wherever possible the impact of extreme weather.

- 11.6 To do so successfully, we have to recognise that as a Council we need to understand our role and that we are not responsible for everything that needs to be undertaken. This includes preventing significant weather events, clearing up the events and providing solutions to meet the needs of all those affected. In our Community Leadership role, we do need to work with other agencies and partners to ensure we all are aware of each other's respective roles and responsibilities in preventing and responding to significant weather events, and we hold each other to account for competently delivering on our respective duties.
- 11.7 There are other public sector agencies that should respond to specific issues, for example, in respect of River Flood Prevention, Flood Mitigation and Flood Warnings – National Resources Wales is responsible for managing the river courses, preventing river flooding, providing accurate and timely flood warnings and is also responsible for 30% of the landmass of Rhondda Cynon Taf, and so has significant landownership responsibilities to the communities of the County Borough.
- 11.8 One of the biggest issues we experienced before and during Storm Dennis was receiving accurate weather forecasts and sufficiently early flood warnings from NRW. If we are to adequately plan to respond to extreme events in the future the early warning information we receive needs to be more accurate and reliable.
- 11.9 The recently released NRW Flood Reports highlight a number of issues that still need to be addressed and the Council's Chief Executive is in discussion with NRW Operation Director to resolve the following:
- **“The Current Flood Warning System Telematics**– Significant damage was caused to river measuring sensors and other telematics, and we need confirmation that the system has not only been repaired but steps taken to enhance the data systems to better inform the flood warning system;
  - **Improving rainfall forecasts** - the NRW February Floods report provides some excellent ideas as to how to better predict future storm and rainfall patterns across Wales, using new technology. However, the red warning was issued on 15<sup>th</sup> February after communities had been flooded. When will we see the benefits of these improvements and can they pilot the new forecasting methodology in South Wales?

- **Flood Warning System** - the NRW report highlights the limitations to the current flood warning system, and we were surprised at the high level of human intervention into the process. During Storm Dennis the report evidences that the staff were totally overwhelmed by the limitations of the system and the expectations placed upon them. Is the Flood Warning System being upgraded and properly resourced in terms of the decision making on when to issue the emergency commands? Again, when is this being introduced and what improvements are being made that will have a positive impact on our data analyses in RCT?
- **Achieving 1:100 year flood protection of river flooding** relies on significant third party assets that are not necessarily intended for flood protection purposes. As the risk management authority, how can you provide reassurance that these assets are fit for purpose and adequately maintained?
- **Local responsibilities** - As the body responsible for managing 30% of the land in RCT, what steps are you taking to maximise the flood mitigation opportunities to which this land could contribute.”

11.10 In respect of the fourth and fifth bullet point, we will need to resolve these in partnership with NRW, by prioritising high risk flood areas and finding solutions together.

11.11 Another pressing issue as a result of Storm Dennis is **Mental Health**. A number of elected members have rightly raised the issue of the mental health and well-being needs of those personally affected by the Storm. For example, for some people the trauma of being rescued from their home has been emotionally very difficult. This is an issue for the University Health Board and the local GPs, and they should be seen to respond to this community need.

11.12 **RECOMMENDATION 1 - To strengthen plans to respond to extreme weather events, it is recommended that we establish a multi-agency working group, which includes NRW and Dwr Cymru, that plans and prioritises County wide investment in flood alleviation and prevention schemes, makes strategic flood prevention funding applications to Welsh Government, develops a comprehensive emergency response to extreme weather events, and provides the immediate comprehensive response to meet the communities' needs.**

11.13 **RECOMMENDATION 2 - We will undertake a further comprehensive review of the County Borough to identify the high risk residential and industrial areas likely to be at most risk of flooding in the future as climate change takes effect and identify the possible longer term alleviation and mitigation measures that could be put in place.** However, this may require

us to consider the future viability of existing homes and properties in areas that are a high risk of flooding, as a result of climate change. The public and businesses will need to recognise that the Council, NRW and other agencies will not be able to protect all properties, and the public sector may have to acquire and demolish such properties to create flood defences or alleviation schemes to protect others. The Strategic Flood Risk Areas analysis has started this process, and we now need to prioritise smaller high risk areas and develop long term flood alleviation schemes that substantially reduce the risk of flooding. This may require the Council to set aside land, such as sports and recreation fields, to create water holding areas to mitigate the risk of river flooding evidenced during Storm Dennis or building underground tanks.

- 11.14 **RECOMMENDATION 3 – The Council will create a Flood Support Team alongside the Housing Grants Service, that supports landowners, residents and businesses in high risk flood areas to procure local flood prevention measures, provides advice and guidance** and supports home owners to apply for the Insurance Re Scheme to improve people’s understanding of what insurance they need and ensure they are financially protected against future flooding. We would also seek to support businesses in flood risk areas to access affordable business and flood insurance, in the event of a future flood.
- 11.15 **RECOMMENDATION 4 – Individual landowners and property owners, particularly in high flood risk areas, will be requested to consider and evidence how best they can protect their land, homes, and businesses through local measures.** Such measures could include flood gates, bunds around commercial properties and ensuring that the property has flood “resilience” features, in terms of stone floors, power supplies above the flood line, and high value machine equipment raised off the floor. This will help limit the potential damage and cost if the property was to flood again. Where the landowner has significant surface water or drainage issues on their land we will expect that the infrastructure is sufficiently robust to alleviate the risk of flooding to other properties. It is proposed that we will appoint a small team of Flood Enforcement Officers including legal support to ensure landowners take their flood responsibilities seriously and are fully compliant with the relevant legislation.
- 11.16 **RECOMMENDATION 5 – To further update the Emergency Plan to ensure that in the event of a major incident we provide local community responses centres within the communities most affected.** We cannot plan for every emergency, but we have to rely on an effective multi-agency



emergency operations framework (the Emergency Plan) and the support from well trained staff that have the equipment and the facilities to be able to think on their feet and respond appropriately to the respective emergency. In doing so, we also need to continue to be able to call upon the local knowledge of elected ward members, the voluntary and third sector and willing volunteers to provide very localised support, such as that provided by Trallwn Community Centre in the period immediately after Storm Dennis. We will also seek to provide a named officer to work with the local elected member(s) to coordinate and facilitate a community response as required from the local community centre.

**11.17 RECOMMENDATION 6 - To respond to the risk of flooding, in the short term we have to ensure that we maximise the benefits of our current infrastructure by undertaking comprehensive maintenance and introducing some enhancement so this infrastructure operates at the optimum level in its response to extreme weather events.** For example, we need to consider our approach with NRW to:

- **Scour risk assessments** – need to be undertaken on bridges. All river bridges that require maintenance, we should ensure that a scour risk assessment should be undertaken to determine if protection from scour needs to be included within the repair strategy. This will increase costs but in the longer term would reduce risk of significant flood damage;
- **River-walls** – there needs to be a programme for specialist inspections of key river-walls developed and a longer-term strategy for vegetation management. Storm Dennis highlighted that certain walls are very susceptible to the force of water catching trees and pulling the walls down. There are also walls which are perceived to be flood walls but they are not designated or built as such. We need to determine whether these walls need to be replaced and/or strengthened in the future;
- **Culverts** – stone masonry culverts throughout the county borough were constructed when the towns and villages were built. They are over 100 years old and have had little regular maintenance so are at high risk of damage due to scour. It is planned to procure a term maintenance contract so repairs can be procured quickly and easily. An exercise to review all the watercourses that pass under the highway that started before Storm Dennis has highlighted that the culvert records for culverts 900mm diameter and over were not complete. This exercise needs to continue so that all the culverts are inspected. Many of these culverts have access chambers that have been covered and will need to be re-established in order to maintain safe access for repairs and inspections. Most of these actions were being

planned before Storm Dennis but the storm certainly emphasised the importance of this work;

- **Undercut/Scour damage** - historically for some inspections river entry has not been possible. Going forward inspections will be targeted when river levels are low so river entry is possible. If the river levels are still too deep then specialist inspections should be made. Scour defects will be given a higher priority for repair, possibly included in the term contract above as the skills required are similar;
- **River Management** – river bed levels are lowering in certain watercourses as can be seen where previous scour repairs are seen to be undercut. This will continue unless there is a longer-term strategy to manage river bed levels. This should be considered alongside the scour risk assessments. We need to agree a comprehensive programme to ensure the river bed levels provide greater capacity wherever possible in partnership with NRW.

11.18 **RECOMMENDATION 7 – The Council will digitalise and remotely monitor its key flood defences, which will include key culverts, outlets and other drainage systems via a central control room.** These key flood defences will be equipped with alarms, remote telemetry systems, digital cameras and will enable the operators to ensure the drainage systems are operating effectively. We will also seek to employ cameras on key points of the river network that have previously flooded in order to be able to regularly monitor levels and be better equipped to warn residents if there are potential river breaches. We will also use the contacts received by the Contact Centre to identify potential cluster of issues and be able to provide a comprehensive and informed response, rather than respond to individual requests in a haphazard manner. We would also seek to bring together, physically or virtually the Council's Communications Team into the Control Room, so that necessary information can be quickly communicated to elected Members and the general public as appropriate. The central control room will be based in Ty Elai, along with the Council's Contact Centre and CCTV centre. We will also improve the digital access of Housing and other Public Health & Protection Staff working with flood victims in the aftermath of future storm events which will provide instant and updated information in the control room, and will facilitate additional support to the flood victims, such as automatic flood payments, or the provision of a skip, or access to a home repairs grant etc.

11.19 **RECOMMENDATION 8 – Creating the capacity to be able to provide timely Elected Member and Public Information during Major Emergencies –** Implementing Recommendation 8, creates the opportunity for Senior Officers and the Communications Team to have direct access to a comprehensive suite



of information that not only facilitates faster decision making but also the opportunity to provide more timely information and updates to elected Members, specific communities affected and the wider public. We will commit to reviewing how we can better use instant messaging such as Text Messages or WhatsApp, that quickly updates Members and directs them to further data sources for their information and use.

- 11.20 **RECOMMENDATION 9 – The Council will create two dedicated Pluvial Drainage Teams, an East and a West team. The teams will increase the staffing compliment in the Drainage teams from 20 to 31 staff, comprising a service manager, two senior drainage engineers and 8 additional operational staff.** The two new Drainage Teams will focus entirely on the refurbishment and maintenance of the Council’s highways, surface water and other water course drainage systems throughout the year. One team will be based in Abercynon and the other in Dinas, serving the County Borough. In addition, the Council will engage with a Specialist Vactor Contractor providing 365 day access to heavy drainage clearance machinery, and two operatives, that can clean the largest, deepest and most inaccessible of heavily silted drains, quickly including pipes, culverts and sewers.
- 11.21 **RECOMMENDATION 10 – The Council will produce on-line information and booklets for flooded households that set out the support available from the Council, and its partners in responding to a households needs, from securing alternative accommodation, financial support and advice, applications for home repairs assistance, health and wellbeing support, environmental health advice on how to safely clean your home after a flood, and other offers of support from the third sector.**
- 11.22 The Section 19 Flood Investigation Reports will be completed in 2021, and these reports will also identify issues, some of them consistent issues, which we will need to resolve. In addition, the Scrutiny Committee will also consider weaknesses that need to be addressed in how the Council responds to future extreme weather events. Therefore, the list of recommendations above is likely to increase over the coming months, as the other pieces of work are completed.
- 11.23 **RECOMMENDATION 11 – The Council will publish a comprehensive Environmental Strategy by 31 March 2021 that sets out the action the Council will take to ensure it is a Net Zero organisation by 2030 and how it will engage with local communities and businesses to change behaviours to significantly reduce the carbon footprint of the County Borough.**



**12 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 An Equality and Diversity Assessment has not been carried out in connection with the recommendations set out in this report as the contents and actions do not require a policy or service change, resulting in no reasonably foreseeable differential impacts.

**13 CONSULTATION**

13.1 There is no requirement to consult on this report, it is primarily for information.

**14 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

14.1 The financial implications of the Council responding to Storm Dennis are significant. The Council triggered an application to Welsh Government's Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme (EFAS) on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 to provide some financial support for the immediate recovery costs. The total cost claimed was £3.762m of which the EFAS, in accordance with the terms and conditions, repaid £1.697m.

<b>Storm Dennis</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Total Cost to Council	2,782,950	979,218	3,762,168
Less EFAS Grant	(717,695)	(979,218)	(1,696,913)
<b>Net Cost to Council</b>	<b>2,065,255</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,065,255</b>
General Fund Allocation	(1,500,000)	-	(1,500,000)
<b>Balance funded in 2019/20 Outturn</b>	<b>565,255</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>565,255</b>

14.2 It is estimated that the total recovery costs, taking into account the need to replace highways infrastructure and drainage systems, will be in excess of £70m and we have had WG confirmation of funding of approximately 10% of this total cost amounting to £6.827M, which was reported in Q2 performance report in November 2020.

14.3 During the course of the response the following financial delegated decisions were made to provide the support required by residents and businesses, and to fund the action taken by the Council.

- [17<sup>th</sup> February – Allocation of Resources from General Fund Balances](#) - £1M to support immediate recovery;
- [18<sup>th</sup> February – Financial Support for Residents and Businesses](#) – Community Flood Recovery Grants – £500 per residential property, £1,000 per business property (SME);
- [21<sup>st</sup> February – Further Allocation of Resources from General Funding Balances](#) – £0.500M to continue to maximise clean-up, recovery and community support work;
- [25<sup>th</sup> February – Grant Funding Support for Property Renovation and Free School Meals](#) – £800K fund (£500K for residential properties, £300K for businesses) funded by £150K general reserves already released, £150K donations, £500K reprioritisation of capital. FSM for 4 weeks (cost £11K);
- [5<sup>th</sup> March – Support to Businesses – Non Domestic Rates Relief](#) – 3 month local relief
- [10<sup>th</sup> June – Tylorstown Tip Remedial Works](#) – £2.5M of emergency works to be undertaken at financial risk to the Council in the absence of any WG funding confirmation.

14.4 If the recommendations in this report are approved, there will be financial consequences, such as in respect of Recommendations 4,8 & 10. Any revenue and capital costs arising from this report will be considered as part of the budget setting process for 2021/22.

## 15 **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

15.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## 16 **LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

16.1 This report is primarily an information report on progress in responding to the consequences of a major emergency caused by Storm Dennis. No significant policy change decisions are being taken in this report. The focus is to strengthen and improve our existing infrastructure, and operating procedures.

## 17 **CONCLUSIONS**

- 17.1 Planning for an unknown weather event is never easy, and when that event is an extreme event that happens in the middle of the night, on a weekend, and covers a wide area, it is inevitably difficult and logistically complex to respond to, particularly when the majority of the workforce is also at home. As a Council, we are not an emergency service, and we do not have the capacity to respond to extreme weather events during the event. Our work is undertaken before and after the event, and this is done in partnership with other public bodies that all have different responsibilities which ideally dovetail together.
- 17.2 The Council's pre-storm planning and its approach after the storm was exceptional. Very few local authorities in Wales could have responded in the same way, taking into account the severity of the storm and the damage caused to homes, businesses and other infrastructure across so many communities. The commitment from Members, managers and staff across the organisation to support those affected was exemplary and it is clear from letters and emails we have received from residents and businesses that this was appreciated.
- 17.3 Many community and third sector organisations provided an excellent response and took responsibility for aspects of the flood recovery. I would particularly make reference to Citizen's Advice who supported many households in negotiating the right support from insurers and holding the insurers to account.
- 17.4 We also recognise that the Council's response to Storm Dennis could be improved. The list of recommendations in Section 11 set out these opportunities.
- 17.5 It is particularly worth drawing attention to the fact that we were unprepared for the overwhelming offer of food and other goods from individuals and businesses for those people affected, including enormous quantities of food from UK national supermarkets. We are very grateful for this support and for the many financial and other donations received.
- 17.6 We also did not initially appreciate some of the basic needs of those flooded and the systems we would have to put in place to help meet those needs. We are grateful for the way in which local community groups stepped in to fill that void. However, we did learn quickly, and responded accordingly, which put us in a strong position when the Covid 19 lockdown occurred a month later.
- 17.7 Storm Dennis caused many types of flooding, all of which are the responsibility of different public and private bodies. To ensure the river, surface water and

sewerage infrastructure is fit for purpose for future extreme weather events and effective flood alleviation schemes are in place, the Council, in its community leadership role, has to bring these organisations together to plan and deliver long term flood alleviation schemes. This will be the most challenging action to deliver, but we will start this process in earnest early in the New Year.

- 17.8 This multi-agency forum will also provide the opportunity to share and consider the S19 Flood Investigation Reports and how collectively we respond to the specific lessons learnt in the communities most affected.
- 17.9 The effects of Climate Change will be with us for decades and Storm Dennis will not be a one-off event. If the equivalent of Storm Dennis occurs again in 2021 after other significant rainfall events, flooding will be inevitable. A coordinated and comprehensive response to severe weather events will take many years to deliver by increasing, where possible, flood alleviation and prevention schemes.
- 17.10 Nevertheless, this Council will do whatever it can to ensure that the impact of future floods is minimised through a comprehensive programme of investment.

**OVERVIEW OF FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PROJECTS BEING DELIVERED BY THE STRATEGIC PROJECTS SERVICE – NOVEMBER 2020**

**Summary**

<b><u>Category</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Projects</u></b>	<b><u>Completed</u></b>
Emergency Repairs.	26	19
Flood Risk Management - Major Schemes	11	0
Flood Risk Management - Small Schemes (2020/21)	23	5
Flood Risk Management - Small Schemes advanced preparation (2021/22)	8	0
Resilient Road 2020/21	16	2



<b>Total Projects</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>26</b>
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**Flood Risk Management - Major Schemes**

Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Estimated Value	Current Status	Est Completion
Nant Gwawr (Phase 2)	Flood Alleviation Scheme	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 62 properties.	Not Known	Application for OBC/BJC only for 2021/22	2022/23
Oaklands Terrace, Clifynydd	Flood Alleviation Scheme	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 78 properties	Not Known	Application for OBC/BJC only for 2021/22	2023/24
Park Lane Aberdare	Flood Alleviation Scheme using overland flow and natural attenuation areas.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 31 properties	£530,000	<b>Under Construction</b> <b>Scheduled for completion by Dec. Weather dependent.</b>	Winter 2020/21
Cwmbach, Canal Rd	Flood Alleviation Scheme using overland flow and flood routing to increase capacity in existing system.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 69 properties	£450,000	<b>Detailed Design ongoing. Expected construction start Advanced work Sept 2020. Main scheme Nov 2020.</b>	Spring 2021
Treorchy FAS - (Phase 1) Cemetery Road	Flood Alleviation Scheme. Phase 1 - diversion/upgrade of culverted watercourse	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 236 properties	£750,000+	BJC being developed. Preliminary Design ongoing	2021/22
Treorchy FAS - (Phase 2) - Column Street	Flood Alleviation Scheme	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 236 properties	£1,000,000+	BJC being developed. Preliminary Design ongoing	2022/23

Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Estimated Value	Current Status	Est Completion
Cwmaman Phase 2	Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 2 - Reduction in peak flows through upper catchment management and traditional methods	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 60+ properties	£550,000	OBC/BJC development (Mott Mcdonald). Flood Wall option being developed	2021/22
Glenboi Road – Mt Ash	Options to manage the highway drainage and exceedance flows from the ordinary watercourse.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 24 properties	£800,000	Design and Development (Redstart) ongoing <b>Grant bid for D&amp;D submitted</b>	2021/22
Pentre FAS	Flood Alleviation Scheme	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 400 properties	£3,000,000+	OBC development (RPS) Being integrated with DCWW and NRW assists. Ongoing. <b>Interconnectivity survey ongoing</b>	2022/23
Nant Frwd Culvert – Flood Routing	Flood Alleviation Scheme	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 18 properties	£300,000	Application for Grant for BJC development ongoing	2021/22
Abercwmbol – Upper Bronallt Terr Catchment	Instillation of an enlarged debris control structure and channel armouring. Within the Upper Culverted ordinary watercourse Inlet area including flood water storage areas.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 30+ properties	£250,000	<b>Preliminary Design and Land enquiries ongoing.</b>	2021/22



**Flood Risk Management - Small Schemes (2020/21)**

Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Estimated Value	Current Status	Est Completion
Bryn Ifor Inlet Upgrade	<p>Upgrade of a Culvert Ordinary watercourse Inlet - inlet enlargement and instillation of a larger Debris screen and overflow route within the headwall structure</p> <p>The work will also facilitate a new access track for future maintenance</p>	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 60 properties	£80,000	<b>Construction Completed (Streetcare)</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Plantation Road	Replacement of existing culvert.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 20 properties and highway	£100,000	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Cardiff Road, Aberaman	This scheme is proposed to upsize the capacity of the existing culverted ordinary watercourse overflow system and identify opportunities to	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 7 properties	£150,000	<p>Detailed design ongoing in 2020/21.</p> <p>Upgrade requires use of private land</p>	2021/22

Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Estimated Value	Current Status	Est Completion
	daylight the redirected culvert.				
Campbell Terrace - Mt Ash	Replacement of culvert Inlet	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 10 properties	£125,000	Grill advanced works (Streetcare) start WC 16/11/20  Detailed Design ongoing for flood Routing element.	2020/21
Granville St - Allen sT mt ash	Replacement and upgrade of Concrete Debris Catcher.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 13 properties	£150,000	Detailed design Completed.  <b>Tender WC 23/11/2020</b>	2020/21
Fernhill Abercwmbai	Upgrade of Inlet structure and facilitation of overland conveyance and interception route to reconnect conveyance flows back into the culverted ordinary watercourse.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 22 properties	£35,000	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Completed</b>

Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Estimated Value	Current Status	Est Completion
Troed y Rhiw/Forest Road - Inlet Upgrades	3 Inlet upgrades feeding into the main Culverted Watercourse.		£75,0000	Detailed Design ongoing	2020/21
Victor Street, Kingscraft St Mt Ash - inlet	Replacement and upgrade of inlet with overflow arrangement (if Possible)	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 24 properties	£100,000	Preliminary Design ongoing.  Advanced works to "channel" designed and out to price.	2020/21
Painters Row, Treherbert - Inlet	Replacement and upgrade of inlet with overflow arrangement (if Possible)	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 4 properties	£45,000	<b>Under Construction</b>  DT Contracting on site.  Progress good	End of Nov 2020
Pentre (Volunteer St) FAS (Advanced Works - Nant Y Pentre Inlet)	Upgrade of the existing culvert inlet structure with the emplacement of an upper debris screen/platform and overflow route.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 237 properties	£300,000	<b>Under Construction</b>  Streetcare (Hammonds) on site.	December 2020
Pentre (Volunteer st) FAS	Instillation of an exceedance flow path and interception drainage (Linear Drainage) to	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 167 properties	£125,000	Preliminary/Concept Design ongoing	2020/21

Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Estimated Value	Current Status	Est Completion
(Advanced Works - Pleasant Street)	reconnect overland flows back into the culverted ordinary watercourse.				
Oxford Street	Highway Drain Replacement due to collapse	Highway Flooding	£60,000	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Mount Street	Highway Drain Replacement and upgrade	Highway Flooding	£25,000	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Completed</b>
"Pretty Ponty"	Pilot Scheme for Urban SuDs	Green Infrastructure. Takes water out of the drainage systems.	£35,000	Detailed design ongoing	March 2021
PFR – Property Flood Resistance (9 Projects)	Distribution and "loan" of expandable flood barriers to doors as interim measure in Flooded/high risk areas.	Increased of protection to Approx. 350+ properties.	£357,000	<b>Project plan and procurement ongoing</b>	2020/21

**Flood Risk Management - Small Schemes advanced preparation (2021/22)**

Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Estimated Value	Current Status	Est Completion
Mt Ash A4059 Upper catchment scour	Repair and armouring of the scoured sections of the Ordinary Watercourse Channel	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 22 properties	£150,000	D&D Grant Awarded.  Preliminary/Concept Design ongoing.	2021/22
Heath Terrace	Repair and armouring of the scoured sections of the Ordinary Watercourse Channel and replacement of two number ordinary watercourse inlet headwalls and debris screens.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 10 properties	£95,000	D&D Grant Awarded.  Preliminary/Concept Design ongoing.	2021/22
Abergorki Tip - Treorchy Cemetery	Upgrade of the existing culvert inlet structure with the emplacement of an overflow route.  Repair and armouring of the scoured sections of the Ordinary Watercourse Channel	Tip Safety	£125,000	D&D Grant Awarded.  Preliminary/Concept Design ongoing.	2021/22



Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Estimated Value	Current Status	Est Completion
Turberville Rd - Porth	Upgrade of the existing culvert Ordinary Watercourse identified as Hydraulically under-capacity and structurally failing.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 20 – 30 properties	£150,000	D&D Grant Awarded. Preliminary/Concept Design ongoing.	2021/22
Tyn-Y-Wern	Lining of a structurally weakened ordinary watercourse culvert and rebuild of several Manhole structures.	Increased standard of protection to properties	£125,000	D&D Grant Awarded. Preliminary/Concept Design ongoing.	2021/22
Standard View	Lining of a structurally weakened ordinary watercourse culvert and rebuild of several Manhole structures.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 5 properties	£125,000	D&D Grant Awarded. Preliminary/Concept Design ongoing.	2021/22
Nant Cae Dudwg	Repair and armoring of scoured sections of the ordinary watercourse channel and replacement of damaged debris screen and channel base	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 12 properties	£50,000	D&D Grant Awarded. Preliminary/Concept Design ongoing.	2021/22



Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Estimated Value	Current Status	Est Completion
Mostyn Street	Rebuild of Culvert Inlet with inclusion of a debris platform/catchpit  The works will also re-channel the ordinary watercourse channel upstream of inlet.	Increased standard of protection to Approx. 3 properties	£30,000	D&D Grant Awarded	2021/22

**Resilient Road 2020/21**

Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Value	Current Status	Est Completion
Rhigos Road - Nant Cnapiau & 2 x Culverts (CV6)	Upgrade an Existing Culverted Ordinary watercourse conveying within the Highway to prevent further structural failure of the culvert plus 2 upgrades or overflows. 3 x Culverts		£350,000	Detailed Design ongoing.	2020/21
Aberdare - Asda Roundabout (CV3)	Raising of the road by 200-400 mm to avoid flooding onto the highway (1km)		£480,000	Detailed Design ongoing.  Est Start Feb 2021	2020/21
Bronallt Terrace - Phase 3 (CV5)	Replacement of defective masonry culverted ordinary watercourse conveying through Bronallt Terrace highway		£200,000	<b>Design Completed.</b>  Tender WC 16/11/20	2020/21
Aberdare Bypass (CV1)	Replacement of existing highway Filter drain with gully connections		£300,000	<b>Design Completed</b> Cost Estimate Awaited.	2020/21

Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Value	Current Status	Est Completion
A4059 - Abercynon - Mt Ash (CV7)	Various Improvements of overland conveyance i.e. instillation of low point within the verge area to manage the low spot flooding.		£65,000	Various Works.  Overflow – <b>completed</b>  Build out – <b>completed</b>  Drainage Mt Ash Town Hall <b>Completed</b>  Additional Drainage at Layby (NEW) – Streetcare Design/Construction	2020/21
Abercynon Road to A4059 New Road	Install wholly new Carrier line with additional gullies to manage the surface water flooding associated to the low spot within the highway approximately 100m		£80,000	Scope may be less than expected.	2020/21

Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Value	Current Status	Est Completion
Cynon Valley Monitoring Stations	Telemetry monitoring stations to be installed at various locations across the Cynon valley		£30,000	Locations completed and a schedule produced for consultation	2020/21
Ynyshir Cycle Path (RV6)	Surface water drainage networks are ineffective and flooding the footpath approximately 280m - history of minor landslips in 2016 that caused the closure for 6months of the path, further uncontrolled surface water conveyance could shut the critical route more frequently		£95,000	Preparing info for pass onto Depot	2020/21
Mynydd-yr-Eos Penygraig (RV8)	Renew kerb, channel, renew 150mm diameter perforated pipe and stone, provide 9 new gully pots covers and frames, 2m edge of carriageway reinstatement, all over a length of approximately 300m.		£65,000	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Completed</b>
A4223 - Porth Relief Road (RV1)	Highway drainage has deformed up to 70% in places and will need replacement (around 100m)		£165,000	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Tonypandy Bypass A4058 Asda- Tonypandy R/About (RV5)	Existing Highway Carrier Line (filter system) is showing significant root mass within the main system approximately 500m which is reducing		£115,000	Detailed Design Complete.	2020/21

Project	Brief Description	Benefits	Value	Current Status	Est Completion
	the capacity of the carrier line to function resulting in frequent Highway Flooding				
Tonypandy Bypass A4058 Tonypandy R/A- Trealaw R/A (RV4)	Existing Highway Carrier Line (filter system) is showing significant root mass within the main system approximately 550m which is reducing the capacity of the carrier line to function resulting in frequent Highway Flooding		£110,000	Preliminary Design	2020/21

**RECENT CAPITAL EXPENDITURE ON FLOOD DRAINAGE SCHEMES**

Ward	Scheme	Expenditure						Spend To 30/11/2020	Remaining Budget	Total
		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21	£M
		£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	
Various	Culvert Inlet Programme					0.047				0.047
	Cynon Valley Highway Drainage							0.044	1.331	1.375
	Drainage Improvements Unallocated							0.000	0.061	0.061
	Flood Alleviation Investment			0.517	0.042	0.005				0.564
	Highways Drainage Improvements	0.167	0.164	0.002						0.333
	Ortho Clinical Diagnostics Projects			0.054						0.054
	RCT Inlet Upgrade Programme					0.036				0.036
	Rhondda Valley Highway Drainage							0.025	1.055	1.080
	Scheme Development of FRMP					0.007				0.007
	Small Works Drainage				0.062	0.042	0.027	0.067	0.016	0.214
	Storm Dennis						0.550	0.910	0.190	1.650
	Strategic Outline Cases						0.041	0.000	0.015	0.056
	Upper Rhondda Strategic Flood Risk Area							0.011	0.029	0.040
	Water Level Monitoring Devices		0.024							0.024
Treherbert	Painters Row, Treherbert							0.004	0.021	0.025
Treorchy	Cemetery Road, Treorchy				0.025	0.001	0.019	0.017	0.000	0.062

Ward	Scheme	Expenditure						Spend To 30/11/2020	Remaining Budget	Total
		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21	
		£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
	Park Road Cwmparc					0.091				0.091
Pentre	Mynydd Yr Eglwys	0.008	0.007		0.012	0.003	0.015	0.000	0.010	0.055
	Nant Y Pentre Inlet, Pentre							0.027	0.123	0.150
	Pleasant St Flood Routing, Pentre							0.003	0.148	0.151
	Tudor Rd, Ton Pentre						0.114	0.024	0.054	0.192
	Volunteer St, Pentre				0.031	0.025	0.004			0.060
Llwynypia	Rosedale, Llwynypia				0.006					0.006
Cymmer	A4058 Cymmer Rd, Cymmer						0.003			0.003
Porth	A4233 Porth Relief Road, Porth						0.008	0.124	0.053	0.185
	Aberrhondda Rd, Porth				0.009	0.071	0.059	0.002	0.008	0.149
	Graig Ddu, Dinas				0.001	0.008				0.009
	Nythbran Terrace, Porth					0.065				0.065
Ynyshir	Ynyshir Cycle Path, Ynyshir						0.001			0.001
	Ynyshir Wall Project	0.017								0.017
Rhigos	Cysgod Y Mynydd Rhigos		0.001							0.001
Hirwaun	Brecon Rd, Hirwaun						0.015	0.000	0.015	0.030
	Rhigos Road, Hirwaun						0.067	0.000	0.008	0.075
Aberdare West	Bwlfa Road, Cwmdare	0.220	0.008							0.228
	Park Lane Trecynon					0.009	0.054	0.238	0.187	0.488
Aberdare East	Maes y Ffynnon Road, Aberdare						0.122	0.002	0.149	0.273
Aberaman North	Bronallt Terrace, Abercwmbi					0.052	0.059			0.111
	Cardiff Road, Aberaman	0.251	0.008							0.259
	Nant Gwawr Aberaman	0.666	0.017							0.683



Ward	Scheme	Expenditure						Spend To 30/11/2020	Remaining Budget	Total
		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21	
		£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
Aberaman South	Cwmaman (Nant Aman Fach)				0.029	0.030	0.015			0.074
	Cwmaman Flood Alleviation			0.023	0.334	0.193				0.550
	Glanaman Rd Cwmaman			0.092	0.149					0.241
Cwmbach	Cwmbach Industrial Estate						0.022	0.135	0.569	0.726
	Cwmbach PROW		0.007		0.018		0.062	0.022	0.128	0.237
Mountain Ash East	Campbell Tce, Mt Ash							0.012	0.113	0.125
	Granville Tce, Mt Ash							0.017	0.132	0.149
	Troed Y Rhiw/ Fforest Rd, Mt Ash							0.007	0.068	0.075
Mountain Ash West	A4059 Layby Drainage				0.048					0.048
	Brynifor FAS, Mountain Ash							0.078	0.002	0.080
	Fernhill Inlet, Mt Ash West							0.005	0.030	0.035
	Glenboi Pumping Station, Mountain Ash							0.013	0.145	0.158
	Victor St & Kingscraft St, Mt Ash							0.015	0.085	0.100
Abercynon	Nant Y Fedw Drainage Improvements	0.607	0.020							0.627
	Wood Rd, Abercynon Flood Alleviation	0.005	0.049							0.054
Glyncoch	Ynysybwl Rd, Glyncoch						0.001	0.004	0.000	0.005
Cilfynydd	Nant Cae Dudwg, Cilfynydd	0.211	0.007		0.018					0.236
Pontypridd Town	Hafod Lane, Trehafod	0.003				0.022				0.025
Rhydyfelin Central	Caenant Flats flood alleviation scheme	0.001								0.001
	Rhydyfelin Flood Alleviation	0.031								0.031

Ward	Scheme	Expenditure						Spend To 30/11/2020	Remaining Budget	Total
		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21	
		£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
	Sycamore Development, Rhydyfelin					0.003	0.094			0.097
	Taff Trail Rhydyfelin	0.058								0.058
Treforest	Gene Metals, Treforest						0.016			0.016
	Treforest PROW		0.002	0.011	0.032					0.045
Taffs Well	Llanwonno Road, Mt Ash						0.065			0.065
	Moy Road, Taffs Well						0.004			0.004
	Nantgarw Rail Training - Waiting Restriction		0.003							0.003
Llantwit Fardre	Plantation Road, Abercynon						0.001	0.099	0.001	0.101
	Waun Hir Phase 1	0.001								0.001
Pontyclun	Miskin Quarry Flare	0.003								0.003
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2.249</b>	<b>0.317</b>	<b>0.699</b>	<b>0.816</b>	<b>0.710</b>	<b>1.438</b>	<b>1.905</b>	<b>4.746</b>	<b>12.880</b>



**To:** Cllr Andrew Morgan – Leader of the Council  
Mr Chris Bradshaw – Chief Executive

**Date:** 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Cllr Morgan & Chris

**RE: SCRUTINY OF FLOODING IN RCT DURING 2020**

I have been requested by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to present the comments and emerging themes arising from the committee's considerations of the Council's response to flooding in Rhondda Cynon Taf in early 2020. In doing so, I have also been requested to present the evidence and information considered from local members, through a scrutiny inquiry session and the written submissions received, inform the findings of the Interval review in advance of Cabinet considerations later this month.

The Chair has asked me to convey his thanks for providing this opportunity to local members and scrutiny to contribute to this review and for the time provided by Officers of the Council to this scrutiny process.

A majority of scrutiny members have acknowledged a number of common themes to have emerged from the inquiry session and the discussions of committee, as follows:

- **Overall there was much praise for the response to the February flooding** from emergency services, community volunteers, neighbours and Council staff;
- **The views of members highlighted a number of areas where further work is needed and improvements could be made** including communication with Elected Members and facilitating a better understanding of the Council emergency response procedures.
- **The process has already identified the development of more precise forecasting by NRW** which would enable early warning procedures to be delivered and to give communities time to respond. This was identified as a key ask by the Committee. (with the added caveat that there is a need to be as realistic as possible to identify major events);

- **Members acknowledged that Storm Dennis was significant and its impact felt county wide.** It was declared a major weather incident by South Wales Police and under these circumstances it was recognised that flooding cannot always be prevented. However, Members did feel that the risk can be managed and actions can be taken to minimise the harm caused by flooding as far as possible.
- **The process has already identified the importance of training for Elected Members, particularly newly Elected Members,** to identify roles and responsibilities in the case of flooding emergencies in addition to being able to signpost residents.

A majority of committee members have acknowledged the following key areas arising from the submissions from local Elected Members:

- **Members recognise the huge effort of staff and the mobilisation of resources to respond to these unprecedented weather events.** Many contributions recognise the swift response of the Council on the ground to support communities in the aftermath of the storm.
- **The contributions made acknowledge the huge scale of this weather event.** Contributions from members recognised the unprecedented nature of the flooding which spread resources and the support efforts of the Council across a range of communities. They acknowledge that despite this logistical challenge, a positive effort was made by staff to respond with the required resources to support communities.
- **The capacity and capability of the current flood water infrastructure to cope with extreme weather events** - Much of the infrastructure was built to deal with 1:100 year flood events, however, these measurements have significantly changed in recent years. Communities need confidence that the Council, NRW and Dwr Cymru will invest to ensure that new and existing infrastructure will be future proofed to deal with more frequent extreme events;
- **The management of forestry, the mountainsides and private land** – a number of the flood events appears to have been caused by the way in which NRW has managed its commercial forestry business, clearing hillsides of trees and leaving natural debris on the hillside, which has found itself in blocked culverts on the valley floor;
- **The first few days in the aftermath of Storm Dennis – communication with local Elected Members** - a number of members have referred to the immediate aftermath of the storm and being able to access information on the action of the Council to respond in their respective community;

- **The human impact of the Storm in terms of individual's mental health and well-being** – inevitably the experience of having your home flooded, destroying your personal effects and possessions and the impact that this has on your confidence of feeling safe and secure at home is considerable. We need to understand the long-term effects of this and ensure support is available;
- **What is the Wales' long-term response to Climate Change? – Are public bodies doing enough and at a sufficient pace to tackle this issue to protect future generations?** – National targets have been set and progress has been made to reduce our reliance on carbon fuels but not at the pace required to prevent future extreme weather events becoming even more prevalent and damaging;
- **The swift recovery response of the Council** – members recognise the recovery arrangements and support made available to residents and businesses and the swift way in which they were made deployed in challenging circumstances. The continued support made available to support residents and local members over the last nine months has also been acknowledged;
- **The majority of responses speak positively about the Council's response in challenging circumstances.** A number of responses deem the response of the Council response to be effective and efficient.

Through the scrutiny process, evidence from partners has acknowledged the pressure placed upon the response of public agencies and emergency services as result of the scale of the severe weather. Natural Resources Wales and Dwr Cymru Welsh Water contributions also acknowledge that services and the response efforts were initially overwhelmed by the severity of the weather and the geographical spread of the impact.

Members of the committee have also asked for me to formally convey their wish to scrutinise and comment upon the Section 19 statutory report and upon the ongoing work that the Council is undertaking into the February Floods as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

When determining to submit this information some members requested the opportunity to clarify their comments as recorded in the attached. The amendments received to date have been reflected in the attached evidence.

Christian Hanagan

**Service Director – Democratic Services & Communication – On behalf of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

**CC:** Cllr Mark Adams – Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
Cllr Wendy Lewis – Vice Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee



## **WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED FROM:-**

1. ABERAMAN SOUTH (Cllr T Williams)
2. ABERDARE EAST (Cllrs S Bradwick & M. Forey)
3. ABERCYNON (Cllrs R. Lewis & E George)
4. CYMMER (Cllr G. Caple)
5. GRAIG (Cllr J Brencher)
6. LABOUR GROUP
7. MOUNTAIN ASH WEST (Cllrs A Morgan & W. Treeby)
8. PLAID CYMRU GROUP
9. RHONDDA (Cllr E. Griffiths)
10. RHYDYFELIN CENTRAL/ILAN WARD (Cllr M Webber)
11. TAFFS WELL (Cllr J Bonetto)
12. TREFOREST (Cllr S Powderhill)

**The following two written submissions were received following the Overview & Scrutiny Committee (09.12.20)**

13. YNYSHIR (Cllr J Edwards)
14. YNYSYBWL (Cllr S Pickering)

## **ABERAMAN SOUTH**

On 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2020 an amber weather warning was in place that was later upgraded to a red warning by the UK Met Office, meaning “danger to life”. The local authority of Rhondda Cynon Taf saw unprecedented levels of rainfall due to Storm Dennis, with over 1,000 properties being internally flooded. It was nothing short of a natural disaster, which I hope never occurs again in my lifetime.

In the days preceding Storm Dennis, I undertook pre-storm visits in Aberaman South to check flood risk assets were clear from blockage. Such as, the river adjacent to ‘Glynhafod Club’ which caused flooding approximately 30 years ago. However, it has received significant funding since I was elected as the local member – Nevertheless, it gives me peace of mind knowing they have been inspected by council staff prior to the onset of the severe weather. When I checked these locations there were no issues to report before 10pm.

Unfortunately, I was alerted to the possibility of flooding by local residents within Aberaman South a few hours later. So, I immediately informed the call centre to request sand bags once again to protect their properties. But, I found it difficult to get them despite only waiting around 4 minutes for someone to answer my phone call initially – it became increasingly more difficult afterwards due to the number of calls being made to the call centre. At 3am, I received another phone call with the heart-breaking news that many properties in Bronallt Terrace, Abercwmboi had been internally flooded. Also, their garages (located at the rear) had an ingress of water because of a substantial blockage to the culvert line on phurnacite land. Soon after this fire engines arrived to provide assistance, the council also attended but at this point it was little they could do.

A few days later, I was contacted by Sian Evans from the local authority’s Community Development team to provide assistance following Storm Dennis. On 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2020 she hosted an advice day alongside myself in Cap Coch Community Centre, Abercwmboi for flood victims within the electoral ward. It was evident from the advice day, support was required to help remove household items damaged during Storm Dennis such as carpets, flooring etc. Therefore, I co-ordinated a “clean-up” with the secretary of Abercwmboi FC, Steve Goodfellow with containers being provided by RCT Council. In addition, I organised a Citizen’s Advice van to help the local residents fill out flood funding applications.

Sian Evans, and myself worked closely together for weeks afterwards to ensure everyone got as much support as possible. But, I must say, the community spirit after such a traumatic experience was fantastic to witness.

The highways depot carried out remedial works in Mostyn Street, Abercwmboi with a new manhole being constructed to improve accessibility. Furthermore, over 100 tonnes of material was removed from the river bed near ‘Glynhafod Club’ – it included a large tree, which was stuck underneath the bridge due to Storm Dennis.

### Lessons Learnt

I firmly believe, the local authority have taken a proactive approach since Storm Dennis occurred. For example, a few weeks ago sand bags were distributed in Bronallt Terrace, Abercwmboi following a yellow weather warning being issued. Moreover, I was pleased to hear RCT Council had four bids pending/approved to



upgrade flood defences in Aberaman South. The Welsh Government funded scheme will hopefully be delivered shortly.

Since Storm Dennis, I have managed to accelerate the remedial works required by the Coal Authority in collaboration with RCT Council, MP Beth Winter and MS Vikki Howells. The removal of silt has been ongoing for a few weeks, and it will cost approximately £130,000 in total. Also, they have provided industrial pumps within phurnacite land for inclement weather conditions whilst remedial works are being undertaken.

In conclusion, it appears the internal flooding to properties which occurred was unavoidable due to the amount of rain that fell in such a short amount of time. The sheer volume of water overpowered our highway drainage systems in Bronallt Terrace, Abercwmboi – even though it was upgraded twice, prior to Storm Dennis. However, I want to reassure the constituents of Aberaman South they have my full backing as local councillor to see further improvement works carried out to stop debris off the mountain washing down and blocking the culvert. Moreover, I will continue to fight their corner whenever possible to prevent future flooding events from happening.

Lastly, I just want to thank the Council Leader, Cllr Andrew Morgan for his continued support, during storm Dennis and since, also my thanks to all members of staff. From highway operatives to call centre workers.

**Councillor T Williams**

**Aberaman South Ward Councillor**

## **ABERDARE EAST**

This is our response to the flooding that accrued in Aberdare East ward in the Cynon Valley

We will start with Gloucester St, a number of houses were flooded here, mostly the bottom end.

It was caused by the stream that runs at the back of the houses, Cllr Forey and myself along with residents would like to know how this stream flooded, yes, some parts of the stream run between residents' gardens, but it is mainly looked after by the council

This stream runs into the main river near the railway station

Cllr Bradwick was made aware of the flooding by residents while he was out seeing what was happening in the ward not council, he then made contact with the council and council staff did attend with sand bags

Our other concern is the stream that starts on the Mardey Mountain then flows into the ward of Aberaman North, in Maesyffynon Lane, this culvert is on both sides of each ward, we have both over many years have had concerns on this, many calls and emails have been sent regarding this

At the time of the flooding a few houses at the bottom of Wind St as you drive up Maesyffynon Lane were flooded, along with many houses in Cardiff Road, this is not the first time these houses have been flooded, we have lost count.

The problem what we have been told by residents is this stream goes under ground and into the river, but the outlet of this stream is well below the river level, so when the river floods the water backs up as it cannot get to the river

We have been told the flooded, culvert under the road was blocked, so what is going to be put in place to stop this happening again

Again Cllr Bradwick was informed by residents of their flooding, and he made calls and emails to the council, plus sandbags were supplied

We will leave it at this but are more than happy to attend any meetings over the flooding in Aberdare East Ward, and are willing to talk to officers

We both understand, that these floods were like once in a lifetime, but for residents it was total heart breaking

We would like to know what has been done and what will be done to resolve the problems

Just to say, Cllr Bradwick had just come out of hospital after major surgery on his shoulder, yet was hands on with residents

**Aberdare East Ward Councillors**

**Councillors Steve Bradwick and Cllr Mike Forey**

## **ABERCYNON**

We write with reference to the flooding that occurred in our ward during Storm Dennis earlier this year.

We fully appreciate that Storm Dennis was an extreme weather event that caused damage across the whole of the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf. That being said, we would like to raise the plight of the residents in Abercynon Ward who had their properties flooded and had to move out for a long period of time. Many of them lost household belongings and personal items of great value.

Three principle areas in Abercynon Ward were affected by flooding as a result of high river levels and culverts that overflowed. These areas have experienced flooding on a number of occasions over the past ten to fifteen years. As one would expect, residents would like the Council to explore measures to prevent flooding in the future.

I will take each area of flooding in turn.

### **Wood Road**

- Flooding occurred when a culvert burst at the top end of the street. This has occurred a number of times in the past ten to fifteen years following heavy rainfall.
- Flood water overwhelmed flood prevention measures that were installed within the past five years.
- The flood water reached a very high level due to the street laying in a 'basin' and the high railway embankment prevents water from flowing or draining away.
- A large water tank to the rear of the properties designed to take floodwater was empty during the storm.
- We ask that officers assess the condition of the culvert with a view to increasing its capacity to take more water. We also ask that Council officers explore the effectiveness of the flood prevention measures that were installed in the past five years.

### **The top of Nant y Fedw**

- Flooding occurred due to an overflowing a culvert that takes the stream from above the road under Nant y Fedw housing estate.
- House No. 263 Abercynon Road was flooded due to the overflowing of a culvert and high water levels in the stream on and adjacent to the property's land. Residents have reported that a device designed to sound when flooding was imminent, did not function.
- Water flowed at a high speed and volume down footpaths at a lower level.
- The force of the water was such that residents had to smash down a wall in order to allow water to flow away.
- The floodwater overwhelmed flood prevention measures installed in the past five years.

- Properties at this location have been flooded on a number of occasions in recent years during heavy rainfall.
- We ask that officers investigate the condition of the the culvert with a view to increasing its capacity and also the effectiveness of the flood prevention measures that have been installed in recent years.

### **River Row**

- Flooding occurred due to high river levels overtopping the river bank.
- This was compounded by the overflowing of the stream adjacent to the Park Road Path.
- Water pools in a number of locations in the street due to the poor road surface that is not aligned with drains. We ask that this is resolved by the resurfacing of the street.
- We ask that officers look at what improvements can be made to river bank flood defences working with Natural Resources Wales and also, working with Transport for Wales officers, seek to increase water capacity on the stream water course.

We know that Council Officers have been extremely stretched during 2020 due to Storm Dennis and the global Covid-19 Pandemic. We kindly ask that officers look at the matters raised in this letter to assess whether additional capital monies from the Welsh Government could be used to improve flood defences.

We would be very grateful if you and Council officers could look at the contents of the letter setting out the concerns of residents in our ward at what is an extremely uncertain and unprecedented time.

### **Abercynon Ward Councillors**

**Cllr Rhys Lewis**

**Cllr Elaine George**

## **CYMMER (Written submission & Photographs)**

1. WW admit that alarms in Trehafod and Britannia pumping stations sounded around 2 a.m. on the morning of 16th February, which alerted WW that there were operational problems at both pumping stations as the flood water increased.

2. Both Pumping Stations were visited, by an employee of WW, at around 7 - 7:30 a.m. on the morning of Sunday, 16th February. During the visits, the flood waters, in Trehafod and Britannia, drained away very quickly as the pumps were brought into action. Unfortunately, during the Intervening period between 2 a.m. and 7:30 a.m., over 40 homes were flooded in Trehafod and around 30 homes in Britannia.

3. In a Trehafod Flood Action Group liaison meeting held on Friday, 13th March, at the Heritage Park Hotel, WW suggested that, in Trehafod, RCT maintained highways drains were blocked, thus preventing floodwater flowing into the appropriate drainage network in order to be pumped away. They confirmed that these highways drains were unblocked between Storm Dennis and Storm Jorge.

Furthermore, in a telephone meeting between Chris Bryant M.P. and WW, held on Friday, 24th April, WW suggested that a culvert overflowed and contributed towards the flooding in Britannia, together with the collapse of the river wall. (I am informed by residents that the homes were flooded before the river wall collapsed. It was the force of the floodwater re-entering the river that caused the weakened river wall to collapse.) Furthermore, WW seems to suggest that RCT Council may not have maintained the culvert, which overflowed, thus contributing to the flooding.

WW also suggest that the river wall at Britannia should be reconstructed as a flood defence, even though the pumping station at Britannia is only around 10 years old and was built on the site of the old Lodge Public House (Britannia Hotel) in order to prevent a history of flooding at this location. As far as I am aware, there were no plans to install flood defences along the river banks.

As in the case of Trehafod, I am informed that floodwaters came through the drainage system and toilets and passed sewage into the properties.

4. WW has admitted that the capacity and power of the pumps in Trehafod may have to be increased, presumably due to the age of the pumping station equipment.

The other pumper station in Trehafod, based at Hafod Primary School, seemed to work effectively and prevented flooding in nearby streets, such as, Lewis St., Wayne St., etc., despite the unprecedented volume of water, at this location, which did not hydraulically overload the network and did not overwhelm the pumping station. (I know that Chris Bryant M.P. would be familiar with the pumping station at Hafod Primary, as he was involved in resolving potential flooding by enhancing and improving capacity, around 18 years ago, together with Yvonne Caple, who was a RCT Councillor at the time).

However, Britannia pumping station is a relatively modern construction, being around 10 years old. I believe that there has been no flooding at this location during this time.

5. A financial hardship payment, as a "gesture of goodwill", was given to residents of Trehafod, by WW, as an emergency payment of £1,000 ".....to enable you (the residents) to deal with the immediate aftermath of the flooding incident". Also, a GSS (Guaranteed Standard of Service) payment of approximately £200 was made by

cheque, equivalent to the annual sewerage bill. Furthermore, for those without home insurance, WW offered claims for property/internal damage using WW's insurers Willis.

Therefore, by implication a similar "goodwill gesture" should be made available to the residents of Britannia, as the circumstances are the same. After the Trehafod Flood Action Group meeting with WW, held on 13th March, I asked Steve Wilson if he would give due consideration to a similar compensation scheme for those residents of Britannia, whose homes were similarly devastated by flooding, as a result of Storm Dennis, and he kindly agreed to do so.

6. Also, In his correspondence to residents of Trehafod, Steve Wilson, Director of Wastewater Services, in his opening paragraphs, commented as follows, viz., "We are aware that parts of Trehafod suffered extensive and devastating flooding last weekend as a result of Storm Dennis.

We appreciate the heartbreak caused by this flooding, and while our investigations and monitoring system show the flooding was not caused by the local pumping station and that the station continued to operate as designed, the pumping station was simply overwhelmed by the unprecedented volume of water caused by the storm.

At no point was the pumping station switched off. Some customers noticed a Welsh Water technician visiting the station on 16th February. This visit was triggered by the pumping station alarm indicating that storm water levels were increasing.....

Our investigations show that the flooding was caused by the extreme weather hydraulically overloading the network which was simply unable to cope. It was not caused by the failure of the pumping station. While we do not accept liability and responsibility for the incident, we know the financial hardship caused by such incidents and this is why we are taking the steps.....to make things easier for you.... We will work with you and the local authority over the next few weeks and months to help restore your homes.....".

Surely, these well-meaning sentiments, agreeing to a compensation package for Trehafod, apply equally to residents of Britannia, and yet no compensation scheme or assistance has been forthcoming, in order to alleviate the financial hardship of residents in Britannia affected by flooding.

I believe that both WW and NRW are abrogating their responsibilities and abandoning the residents of Britannia, leaving RCT Council to consider repairing, enhancing and modernising the river walls and flood defences.

During Storm Dennis the river walls, including some of the gardens, between 5 & 8 Eirw Rd., were washed away, completely or partially (see attached photographs).

No. 8 Eirw Rd was eligible for a Flood Recovery Grant of £500, as flood water entered the house.

However, in the case of No. 7, for example, the resident was not eligible for £500 as no flood water entered the house, even though the river wall and garden has been washed away. Is there any discretion, under the regulations, to pay the Flood

Recovery Grant in such circumstances, due to the significant damage incurred to the property?

Furthermore NRW has stated that the walls were not flood defences but river/training walls, therefore the responsibility of the riparian land owner. The insurance companies have also stated that they will not bear the costs of repair to the river wall as they are regarded as flood defences.

A "catch 22" situation indeed.

I shall be obliged if, in due course, you will consider these circumstances and, perhaps, provide advice in relation to eligibility for an Emergency Assistance Payment Grant from Welsh Government, a Community Recovery Grant or Council Tax exemptions.

**Councillor G Caple**

**Cymmer Ward Councillor**

















**Jayne Brencher**  
**The Graig Ward**

Whilst residential properties in my ward were mainly unaffected by the extreme rainfall and flooding that occurred in Pontypridd in February, there has undoubtedly been a negative economic and social impact on the town, including businesses in the High Street area. Overnight the town became inaccessible and severe flooding in Taff St and Mill St impacted on all the town's businesses. During the night, we monitored the situation closely but I visited the next morning with Alex Davies-Jones MP after flood water lowered in Taff St. Speaking to various businesses across the town, it was clear that the destruction was overwhelming and a deep despondency of the town's future was expressed.

The loss of the pedestrian access into the Park via the Marks and Spencer bridge was also deeply felt. However, within hours a clean-up operation began by business owners and volunteers, supported by RCT staff and a strong community response became evident.

The role of GTFM as a means of communicating information and organisations such as the Town Council - itself severely impacted - became evident, but most importantly the enormous response of local residents and businesses which was to become an important factor over the coming days. RCT staff were able to focus on responding to extreme immediate emergency call outs and supported local efforts. This role strengthened as the days passed and RCT worked closely with local groups to establish a more co-ordinated support network.

Of prime concern, however, was the situation in households directly affected in the town area such as Sion St and Berw Rd immediately bordering the town.

All local members in the wider Pontypridd area co-ordinated efforts and the Treforest and Trallwn Community Centres established themselves quickly as centres for flooded residents and over the following days they provided a critical support network.

Local churches and volunteers must also be commended for their huge efforts over the following weeks. Hot meals were provided by Coedpenmaen Baptist Church and other local churches in addition to support from the Mormon church which was celebrated later.

Donations came from across the UK and clothing became such an issue that through social media we were able to establish the need for cleaning items (humidifiers etc.) to focus donations. The health and safety aspects of cleaning properties were quickly highlighted and RCT officers were able to offer advice.

The presence of a lady from Save the Children fund helped in the disaster relief operation and local volunteers should be commended for their professional approach supporting our officers and staff.

Once personal well-being and alternative accommodation for those effected was established and all residents checked by local members and RCT staff, issues emerged relating to insurance and volunteer solicitor William Watkins attended the Trallwn Centre on behalf of Capital Law to give free advice on insurance issues. RCT mobile library also visited to offer advice to residents and at Trallwn we set up Citizens Advice - and they, with RCT officers, were able to navigate those affected through the grant processes and other post flooding challenges.

It is notable that all local members worked closely together and regular meetings with RCT officers were established at the centre until officers were able to move the remaining donations and allowed the centres to continue their normal functions. The outcomes were that, as a result of this extraordinary response, affected families were not only receiving practical support but were really moved and warmed by the responses from within the town and beyond.

This community spirit was again evident with the Covid 19 volunteer groups that sprang up across the area and there is growing confidence in the community that the town is resilient enough to cope with anything!

#### Lessons learned

- The vital need for quick response coordination which would include the Pontypridd Town Council and community centres and local volunteer groups-a contact network and emergency response strategy constantly updated with key partners.
- Communications with volunteers etc through local media and social media coordination to avoid misinformation and data security –names and addresses of those needing support were sometimes shared openly.



**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**RE: RCT Labour Group's Response to Storm Dennis**

We are writing to you to provide an overview of some of the RCT Labour Group Member's experiences and feedback on the truly devastating weather events in mid-February, which not only saw residents and businesses affected by flooding on an unprecedented scale, but also saw a significant amount of the Council's own infrastructure sustaining damage, including highways, river walls, culverts and bridges. This was, of course, exacerbated by the landslip at Llanwonno/Tylorstown, which saw 60,000 tonnes of material fall away from the mountainside, thankfully at no loss of life.

With almost 1,500 of our residents and businesses affected, Storm Dennis brought the worst flooding episode that Rhondda Cynon Taf has ever witnessed, and this was also the case in a number of communities spread across England and Wales. The weather event has since been classified as a 1-in-290 year event that brought a month's worth of rain in just 48 hours, with 160mm of rain falling in Maerdy between midday on the Friday and Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> February – this was the highest level recorded in Wales and was closely followed by recordings in Hirwaun. The scale of the event prompted the Met Office to issue the highest level (Red) weather warning which poses a severe risk to life and prompted a major incident to be declared in RCT by the emergency services. This was clearly an extraordinary weather event.

It is evident from the initial investigations that the causes of the flooding were complex and multifaceted, with pluvial flooding prevalent in a number of communities in the northern areas of the County, and river flooding the primary cause in more southern areas. The two are, however, inexorably linked, with the significant rainfall further up the valleys driving the three rivers situated in the County to record their highest levels for a generation – including the River Taff, which broke a 40 year record by 80cm in reaching a level of over 5m.

With regards to the Council's response on the night, crews did largely attend the vast majority of calls, with some responses (particularly during the early parts of the night) particularly swift and others many hours later, although we fully recognise that this was due to the sheer volume of calls being received from across the entire County. Several main artery roads were rendered impassable due to deep flood water, which also hampered crews in getting to some locations. Furthermore, in some instances, the severity of the flooding was so great that Council staff could do very little even when they did attend. Some Members have relayed that even with Council

staff and emergency services attending the scene and pumping water, the volume of rainfall was so great that the actions had little to no effect.

The consensus amongst Members of this Group is that whilst the Council did take the necessary steps to prepare for the weather event by sourcing additional Highways and Call Centre staff, as well as additional plant and machinery via external contractors, the intensity of the weather event and their widespread nature created challenging circumstances for the Council and emergency services.

It is our view that, given the severity and the scale of the damage and destruction caused by Storm Dennis, that the Council's response in the aftermath of the event was timely, effective and concentrated the help and support it provided in the right areas. Through the establishment of the Major Incident Recovery Board, the £1.5m released from the general reserves and the further £500,000 were able to be allocated to supporting priority individuals and households via initiatives such as the Community Flood Recovery Grant – Hardship Payment and four weeks of free school meals; small and medium-sized businesses through the £1,000 payments and the provision of skips to those internally flooded; and emergency infrastructure assessments and works. We would also like to recognise the hard work of Council staff and Officers in assisting those who had been affected both on the night and over the course of the following weeks and months.

It is widely accepted that the increasing impact of climate change is likely to mean that we experience more severe weather events more often. It is important that the Council now focuses on potential courses of action that can be taken forward to mitigate the risks of such devastating flooding occurring again in the future – both in preparedness for such events through the further development of a comprehensive programme of flood defence works (which we note to already be ongoing), and also in terms of responding to major instances of flooding.

To conclude, while the Council took the necessary steps to prepare in advance for the impact of Storm Dennis, this was clearly an event that none of us have ever experienced previously and it is vital that – in light of the factors outlined above – the necessary lessons are learned to inform the future planning and response. We would welcome the Council bringing forward a detailed plan of investment over the next 3-5 years in addressing these key flooding areas within the Council's responsibility; but also progressing discussions with both NRW and the Welsh Government about wider river flood protection assets. The Council needs to use this as an opportunity to review all of its functions and responses to such a major event.

Submitted on behalf of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Labour Group



13<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**RE: Local Submission from the Councillors for Mountain Ash West**

We are writing jointly to share our local experience during the unprecedented flooding events caused by Storm Dennis on the weekend of Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> February.

We were first made aware of flooding issues in the Glenboi area at around 10:15pm – due to the horrendous weather and torrential rain. At this point, we experienced no issue in getting through to the Council's call centre and reporting the incident, which was promptly attended by the Council's Highways crews. We also made a 999 call to the South Wales Fire and Rescue service responded to to assist in pumping water.

Despite Highways Officers checking the pumping station at the location, which was working at maximum capacity, and the Fire Engines in attendance pumping the water with 2 appliances, the water levels continued to quickly rise due to the sheer volume of the rainfall. At around midnight, Emergency Planning Officers were contacted as we became aware of further issues of flooding arising in other locations across Mountain Ash and evacuations were needed.

By the early hours of the morning, the situation had sadly deteriorated further, with significant flooding of some key routes in and around Mountain Ash, including the town centre and Miskin Road, as well as a section of the major A4059 route, meaning it was almost impossible to get in or out of Mountain Ash by the early morning.

In all of the local cases of flooding that we reported, the Council's crews did attend, albeit in some cases it was many hours later due to the sheer volume of calls that were being received on a County-wide basis. Furthermore, the flooding was so severe in some instances that there was little that staff could do even when they did attend.

In the days following the flooding, we had a number of site visits with Council Officers and Natural Resources Wales, and we are pleased to see that progress is being made in carrying out some of the repairs and improvement works. Whilst work is only being carried out at a few sites so far, we are aware that investigations and design works at many other sites across RCT are ongoing and will need to be prioritised as part of the Council-wide programme.

In both of our experiences, it was certainly the worst flooding episode in Mountain Ash that either of us can recall. We both share the view that we were able to contact the Council until around midnight to report issues and Officers responded as well as they possibly could, especially before the situation drastically turned for the worse across the County at around 12am-1am as the storm intensified.

In terms of the recovery, the use of the library bus supported by CAB was something that was well received by residents as a point for information. Residents clearly remain anxious whenever there is bad weather so the Council needs to lay out a programme of flood alleviation works for the next 2 to 3 years.

Yours sincerely,

**Councillor Andrew Morgan**  
**Councillor Wendy Treeby**

**Mountain Ash West**

## **Plaid Cymru Group Submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee relating to the Floods**

Unprecedented. Devastating. Traumatizing.

Those are the three most often used words in relation to the floods that hit so many communities across RCT this year. And we weren't the only communities affected, with similar scenes being seen across the country.

All Councils affected have been overwhelmed, and it has been estimated that at least £500m more is needed in the next decade if Wales is to avoid significant flooding.

Unfortunately, though for those communities affected, many of the questions they have remain unanswered nine months on, with some suffering further floods as recently as August. Every time there is now heavy rainfall, people are naturally anxious. Nothing done to date has alleviated their fears.

A number of reports have either been published or are pending, but it is clear that they are limited in scope and are conducted by the organisations themselves rather than by an external agency. We believe, as do thousands of residents, that there must be an independent inquiry to bring together all those reports, scrutinise them and bring together the evidence and experiences of residents and businesses. It is the only way that we can secure the answers and justice for the residents and businesses affected.

At the recent meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 November 2020, we were limited to a maximum of 5 minutes to present our views. It should be noted this was the only time we have been asked for our evidence, though we have asked for the opportunity to do so a number of times since February. This is not sufficient if the Council is serious about learning lessons from its response to the floods, to help inform future investment as well as response in an emergency situation.

### **Why should there be an inquiry?**

#### ***Limitations of Section 19 reports***

The reports referenced in section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act do not differentiate between a major incident of flooding and more localised flooding. We believe this to be inadequate in light of the severity of the flooding that occurred in RCT this year.

In effect, the act also asks Councils to investigate themselves as part of the process, something which is surprising given the important role Local Authorities also play in flood prevention.

Businesses and residents affected do not have any opportunity to input their own experiences as part of this process and submit evidence. Again, given the scale of what occurred, this means that all reports published or are pending are limited in what they will reveal. Video footage and photographs would greatly help

investigators to better understand what happened in each of the locations affected, as the reasons differ widely and include potential lack of maintenance of drains and flood defences, failed pumps, trees been cut from mountainsides and debris left in rivers and much much more. The only way we can plan to prevent flooding in the future is by understanding what happened. Only an independent inquiry will be able to achieve this, by taking a holistic overview of what took place and why, and also, if anything could have been done differently that would have prevented homes and businesses from being affected to the extent they were. It would also help us understand the Council's preparedness for floods, as well as response to the floods this year and help us learn lessons for the future.

### ***Climate Emergency***

In 2019, the Welsh Government declared a climate emergency. The Future Trends report, published in 2018, predicted that by 2030 the predicted potential impacts on Wales include flooding, coastal changes, drought, shortages of water, risks to health and wellbeing from high temperatures, and risks to nature.

An independent inquiry would help us understand the role the changes to the climate played in the flooding and determine what actions we need to take now – rather than in years to come – in response to climate change. It would also help determine how we should best invest to prevent flooding. RCT Council are taking some steps to try and prevent some further flooding but these are sticky plaster solutions rather than permanent ones. We need a plan that takes into account both the whole of RCT, and arguably the whole of Wales if we are serious in responding to the Climate Emergency.

### ***Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015***

We are fortunate to have in place in Wales the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, meaning that all public bodies – including Local Authorities and Natural Resources Wales – must embed the act in all that they do. Obviously, the 2010 act does not take this into account, and therefore is focused on finding out what happened in a local area at a point in time rather than also being focused on future outcomes. An independent inquiry would need to apply the principles of the act to their work, making it a much more worthwhile and insightful process than simply a Section 19 report.

### ***Impact on physical and mental health***

An independent inquiry needs to include looking at the impact the floods have had on the health and wellbeing of residents affected, both children and adults. The Section 19 report looks at the material elements, eg, if pumps drained properly but it does not in any way look at the human side of the impact. As local Councillors representing areas affected, we have seen with our own eyes the toll the floods have had on the physical and mental health of children and adults. There is a long-term impact that needs to be considered, and none of this is being looked into at present.

### ***Impact to the local economy***

Many of those affected had been costed out of insurance or did not have cover for flood damage. This has had a huge financial impact on them, and also means they are either not able to secure insurance for the future or are facing extremely high premiums. We must look at how we can support businesses and residents in these areas, so that if the worse happens again in the future, they are protected.

Many businesses that were flooded are also lacking confidence in the way the reasons for the floods are being addressed, and are now considering re-locating to an area where there is a lower risk of floods. Given the importance of businesses as employers, especially in an area such as the Treforest Industrial Estate, it would be a huge blow to an area that already has high unemployment and high dependency on food banks. This would further increase child poverty in the area.

### **Conclusion**

Whilst it is intended that our five minute presentations will feed into the Section 19 report, given the limitations of what we could present in such a short time and that no in-depth evidence has been sought from us nor the residents and businesses affected, it is clear that the report will not be able to take into account the many issues that the local communities have raised. It will mainly relate to technical matters and will be limited in being able to help us understand how the Council responded, and the lessons that we need to learn. Hence the need for an independent inquiry.

The precedence for commissioning an Independent Investigation was made in the first National Assembly for Wales in 2000.

The Environment, Planning and Transport Committee under the Chairmanship of Richard Edwards AM commissioned an Independent report to LEARN any relevant lessons and INFORM future policy on waste disposal in Wales. This is known as the Purchon Report on the Nant Y Gwyddon Landfill Site dated 12th December 2001.<sup>1</sup>

Like flooding there was a regulatory framework covering waste disposal but it did not stop that committee with the full support of Sue Essex AM - the then Government Minister who had portfolio responsibility - from supporting an independent Investigation to learn the lessons and drive forward policy in Wales

The terms of reference were set by the Committee in consultation with the Minister and used as headings to format the final published report. The infamous Tip was operating throughout the investigation but closed following the publication of a very damning report. Many agencies regulating the hazardous waste at a national and local level were held to account in the final report, as was RCT and its predecessor Council. The Environment Agency, Audit Commission, Wales Office and National Assembly also had questions to answer.

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<https://senedd.wales/Committee%20Documents/Independent%20Investigation.%20Nantgywyddon%20Landfill%20Site.%20Investigator's%20Report-12122001-29740/3c1086e5000c772400005cdd0000000-English.pdf>

There is a striking comment highlighted in the report in relation to information being withheld by public bodies who relied on “commercial confidentiality “to defend their position.

“When seeking to investigate matters of great public interest, where virtually all the business concerns public money and where the risks, financial, health and environmental, fall on the public, and its purse, lack of transparency is unsatisfactory”.

The report also says,

“ The procedure was entirely new and required a degree of innovation, tolerance, flexibility, patience and good will from all those involved “ and also “ The search for facts, relevant data and opinion is never easy and in the UK we are not used to non-adversarial governance or inquiry procedures. The National Assembly for Wales has sought to conduct an entirely open investigation and I feel honoured to be part of that approach in the early days of the Assembly’s history. “

We hope that this brief reminder of the innovative way that the first Assembly, in its infancy some two decades ago, dealt with a very high profile environmental disaster in the Rhondda will persuade the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet to use all its influence to support an independent inquiry.

We have nothing to lose, but everything to gain if we allow for proper scrutiny of the floods and our preparedness and response. Those affected must be given the opportunity to have their say, and receive the answers they deserve about why the flooding occurred. This will help us better understand how to prevent flooding in the future, as far as is possible, and inform where investment is needed. It will also help inform how best to support the children, adults and businesses affected in a cohesive and joined up way as well.

Importantly and crucially, it would help us as a Council to understand if we could have done anything differently, before, during and after the floods. None of the reports currently underway or published will provide that honest and frank assessment which is essential if we are serious about learning lessons for the future.

## **Appendix A:**

*Evidence sent to Cllr Heledd Fychan from affected residents and businesses, and why they believe an independent inquiry is essential, as part of the campaign for an Independent Inquiry.*

*"I've been left with bronchitis since the floods. I'm still on antibiotics and steroids I'm not well at all they wanted me to go into hospital yesterday but I said I can't because my son is gonna uni on Monday and I've got two other children. Now we are in lock down I'm not good with my mental health either"*

*"I honestly feel like this experience has pushed me to the brink. It's been one of the worst things I've ever experienced and still affects me every day in some way. Even filling in this survey and thinking back to it all I've cried. I had 6 weeks off work with stress, I can't sleep or relax when it's raining badly. I don't know if I'll ever be the same again, I've spoken to many neighbours who all agree it's like we have PTSD. The mental and emotional stress of the whole situation has absolutely shocked me, I've always regarded myself as a very strong person but this almost broke me. Waking up at 5am to the sound of running water and going downstairs to dirty water pouring in your house and looking out the window to see a literal river raging past your house and taking cars with it, with absolutely no warning at all, it makes me sick to my stomach thinking about it even now. How are we ever supposed to relax in our homes again when there's bad weather? We can't trust NRW or RCT for that matter. My sense of safety in my home has been robbed from me and my family. We've been moved into an unfurnished flat in a strange area and then we went into lockdown as well, we literally have a bed and a tv because we lost everything else and then with lockdown getting furniture was practically impossible. Then on top of all that stress we have the stress of trying to rebuild our houses and lives, deal with insurance companies who are basically soulless monsters in some cases, source 2 new cars. If I ever had to go through this again... well, I don't think I could. I'd be in a psychiatric hospital. They need to protect us before they take more of us and more from us than they already have, we can't survive another instance like this."*

*"I'm disabled the help we received we zero we had to do all the work ourselves."*

*"I feel extremely let down by authorities, we have been forgotten about and no one wants to own up to their part in what has happened. The council think that by giving some money it will go away and welsh water/natural resources won't take won't accept liability, and I as the innocent party am now paying the price, I have had no help off anyone because I've had insurance which is unfair as I've done the correct thing. I have lived in Treforest for nearly 12 years and loved it up until that night, I no longer wish to live in the area if no one can help prevent this from happening again but will not be able to sell now and am stuck there."*

*"Our eldest daughter (20) has been diagnosed with PTSD as a result of the flood. She is on medication, receiving counselling and although she tried, she has been unable to return to work and as a result has had to leave her post with BT. Her wellbeing is very much our focus. We cannot believe that we have never had that much rain before, there must be a more rational explanation . Someone is*

*responsible, we are desperately worried that this may happen again. We need reassurance that steps will be taken to prevent another disaster. Anxiety levels are high every time it rains.”*

*“In some respects The lack of support from the local authorities as far as they are concerned we have insurance so that’s our problem bear in mind many insurance companies have got out paying out or underpaying. The lack of any report, any sign of prevention, even just answering our questions or having a meeting. I have to reassure my wife and young children it won’t happen again and I honestly cannot tell them that it won’t. Also I would really want to know why major funding campaigns were set up separately rather jointly as we are all RCT and we were all affected.”*

*“We needed advice on what to do to the house (in absence of insurance company guidance). This advice was very difficult to get despite contacting RCT many times. They responded once our local councillor expedited our request. We are now very anxious each time it rains. We need answers to whether this was a natural event or whether there is blame. If there is blame, then we will hopefully rest easier during future rain storms as we would live in hope that lessons would have been learnt.”*

*“We had a lot of presence from council, dwr cymru and NRW etc in Treforest immediately following the flood. Almost 6 months on much of the discussion seems to focus further up the valley and Treforest residents and effect in Treforest (not Pontypridd Town or Pentre) is largely forgotten. We would like to safeguard our house by moving entrance ways to the property to higher ground, is funding or can funding be made available to strengthen personal flood defenses.”*

*“It was very traumatic when it happened - it has caused my mental health to worsen and I live in fear that when I am able to move back that it will happen again. Where I am living now I feel isolated and alone -trying to cope one day at a time to stop myself from feeling suicidal And depending on people to chat with on phone Especially past few months due to COVID not able to visit my elderly parents or friends and family.”*

*“I would like to know what happened that night. It wasn’t just the rain it was something much more significant that morning on the 16th February. We are devastated and will always live that nightmare. Also Financially it’s devastated me bringing up two children of GCSE ages on my own.”*

*“The stress and financial effects of having my business closed due to flooding has affected me greatly I have never had time of work before but haven’t worked now for four and a half months and I’m one of the lucky ones that had the builders in straight away regardless of covid.”*

*“Yeah since being in the floods I haven’t long come off medication because I had newmonia and chest infection several hospital visits and tests and they said it was because I was up to my waist in water now I’ve been left with bronchitis for rest of my life”*



*"I also lost my car in the flood. It's been a Very stressful time. I am a single person. I am now living with my parents In a small 1 1/2 bedroom house. I am still going to work. The whole experience has been horrific and very upsetting."*

*"Because of covid Prehaps the council could have helped with priority supplies of plaster etc that would have helped immensely. I am extremely worried about the increase and availability of insurance for next year."*

*"it has been an horrific time for myself and family. We have had to move out while repairs are taking place as the house was unlivable. It will be 6 months in total before we will be able to return"*

*"It has tipped our life's upside down, our 3 children's houses were effected too, to see that much water and devastation in our house has been horrendous and it's hasn't helped with Covid 19"*

*"We are concerned about the impact on resale of our home (We has planned to sell this year) as well as insurance premiums and of course the impact of future floods on our home and our lives"*

*"It's destroyed our lives, the difficulty with the insurance is unbelievable, 5 months on and nothing done at property, they are looking to knock down 7&8 Rhyd-Yr-Helyg and rebuild"*

*"Just that I think it could have been prevented and someone has messed up somewhere and we need answers, my dads last months should have been in his own home not in a Temp house"*

*"There was no help we was left to fight the floods ourselves with our neighbors .if wasn't for my neighbours helping me I would have been in more mess"*

*"The level of response for Trefforest was less than anywhere else, they had council employees cleaning the park before helping with peoples houses!!!"*

*"How it's turned out lives upside down. Petrified when we have bad weather. Kids asking are we going to flood again. Living in fear."*

*"Haven't cleaned up the roads and pavement after the flood and haven't collected the sand bags from Trehafod all over the pavement"*

*"We lost our pet. Our dog was downstairs. Our children are traumatised knowing she suffered and drowned. We want answers"*

*"It was one of the worst experiences ever which is still going on.. mentally, physically and emotionally draining."*

*"We took the brunt of the water because we were directly in its path we have left our home structurally unsafe"*

*"Just the devastation it caused to the community and the community spirit shown by everyone was superb"*

*"my car was written off. I am £600 out of pocket from car hire charges because it was a natural event"*

*"We are still in temporary accomadation that one night has kept us from our home and neighbours"*

*"I just hope nobody else goes through it,my wife was in tears,all of our family photos are gone."*

*"I never want to experience this again abd I am scared to return to my home when it's finished"*

*"The lack of sympathy that was shown by the council left us for 3 days with nothing"*

*"I have lots to say, including being insured is irrelevant. We are not in our home."*

*"It's been the worst experience ever and would never want to go through it again."*

*"I live on my own and I was petrified as it was on the fourth step of my stairs. No warnings. Middle of the night. Rescued by boat the officers were brilliant!"*

*"Felt like we were on our own watching all our treasures going down the drain"*

*"It's just heart breaking and mentally put strain on our family."*

*"Was not alerted quickly and not enough time to move possessions"*

*"Council did nothing till it was too late."*

*"Not enough support no am or mp in sight"*

*"It's really bad and stops your life"*

*"I have mental health issues since the floods. Please help me."*

*"If I may share my experience briefly - my business is located within Rizla House (the former Rizla factory building) in one of the units to the rear, north facing side. We look out to the substation which separates us from what is known as Power Station Hill i.e. Tonteg Road. We were therefore in the 'firing line' when the flood water came and had around 14 inches of water inside our unit which resulted in a great deal of the equipment stored there being affected and around three months of work to save the vast majority of it! I remember watching the aerial images of the river rising and seeing the path that the flood water took. I noted that the river breached its bank at the rear of the small industrial estate at the other side of Power Station Hill, known as Taf Business Centre. This breach was adjacent to the old transport cafe at the rear of the site. In the days following, I did a little recce of the area and observed that contractors had been at work in that exact area on the river bank installing perimeter fencing. Now, I cannot prove that they did anything to compromise the bank there, but it did seem at the time that there were less trees there and that the bank was perhaps a little lower compared to images found on Google Street View from a couple of years prior. Regardless, of any issues of liability, it is clear to me that this section of the river bank needs building up in the same way as has been done further along Tonteg Road - opposite the Hutchings*

*Vauxhall and other car dealerships. At no point did the flood water breach the built-up embankment there. Thank you once again and here's hoping that answers are found and something can be done to protect residents and businesses from such catastrophic events in future”*

*“While our area of Hawthorn was not actually flooded, it was a ‘close’ call. Mentally it caused myself (even while with family in NZ) and neighbours, many hours of worry watching the water ‘lap’ at the very top of the flood bank, near us!!*

*It still does worry me personally, as of course this could/will re-occur??I would support an Independent enquiry because -*

*a. Worst flooding in my living memory and I am 70 years old*

*b. Overall COST financially of the floods to the tax payer AND the negative impact this has on our RCT area. Seeing photos of the town centre under several feet of water.*

*c. The impact mentally, physically and financially to residents and businesses on the area. Again, on a negative note many businesses may be considering relocating? These businesses need to know things will not be ‘brushed under the carpet’. We want them to be convinced and confident to remain in RCT.*

*d. No political bias. A party majority, would likely result in actual or perceived bias!*

*e. Independence infers fairness, truth, facts AND no ‘bulls..t*

*f. ‘Scotch’ rumours replace them with facts*

*g. Result in recommendations which can be audited and properly action planned/supervised.*

*h. If needed, not only genuinely learn from any errors but also, bring people/organisations to account.”*

*“We are at Lewis St Pentre and we were flooded in February and high water levels in June.....*

*The trees were removed from the mountain in Pentre and when we had rain the brash washed into the culvert blocking it so the water overflowed into the lower streets of Pentre*

*We had been renovating for a year and we were moving in in 3 weeks time, then got flooded so we're unable to move in until the end of May.*

*We were not insured as the house was classed as empty so not able to insure an empty property*

***WE ARE LIVING IN FEAR OF MORE FLOODING EVERY TIME IT RAINS!!!”***

## **RHONDDA**

Additionally I would like to re-iterate the point I raised verbally during the meeting regarding the situation in Trehafod specifically. I attempt to capture them here:

1. As a councillor I was unprepared for the events and unfamiliar with the expectation on local councillors during an emergency situation in my ward. Based on this I would like to see a thorough training programme implemented.

2 Local councillors were the only people available on day 1, 2 and 3 in Trehafod to be a liaison between the population and council services. We were seen as representatives of the council by local volunteer groups and by members of the public. We were expected to know what was going on, what help was available, what the council could or could not provide. Access to this information was slow and difficult to come by, leading to frustration for myself as a councillor and frustration for local people.

3 Dealing with the anger and upset that was expressed by local people was difficult and potentially explosive. This should be considered in any future training provision

4 I feel strongly that local volunteer networks and councillors should be a key part of recovery work post emergency. This doesn't not seem to be planned for by the local resilience forum nor by RCT emergency plan with the content in these plans being far more strategic. Work is needed on a Community level to ensure there is a network of people ready to kick in with relevant training and designated tasks in such events. These volunteers could also potentially be active in monitoring local issues that are relevant to emergency situations.

5 Having one central point of contact was not sufficient for the needs of councillor and volunteers trying to help families in desperate conditions. Direct contact details of key individuals that were available to support, were known about through ad-hoc means and due to coincidence.

There is far more to share in terms of wider impact of the floods, that is relevant to all named agencies as well as agencies not currently part of a section 19 investigation, such as the local health board. This is why I support an independent enquiry.

My comments are offered in the spirit of learning and developing strong robust provision for the future. This is essential considering the climate change context. I am aware how hard everyone worked during this period and how many are still working now to deal with the aftermath of Storm Denis. It is important now that we identify what worked and what improvements can be made. I also recognising that people -officers, councillor and community volunteers worked as hard as they could during these hard times and am grateful for this.

**Eleri Griffiths**  
**Cynghorydd Ward y Rhondda Ward Councillor**

## **Response to Storm Dennis in Rhydyfelin Central/Ilan Ward**

As has been said a number of times, the flooding events of February this year through three named weather events brought unprecedented levels of destruction and damage to communities across Rhondda Cynon Taf, with Storm Dennis seeing the worst flooding episode in a generation.

Communities in the constituent parts of the County were impacted – including many across the length and breadth of RCT that had no previous experience of flooding, and this extended across the Rhondda, the Cynon Valley and Taff Ely. Unfortunately, areas in the Rhydyfelin Central/Ilan ward, which I represent, were also affected by Storm Dennis.

It is important that in reflecting on the flooding events that we recognise the scale and magnitude of the event that impacted our communities earlier this year – Storm Dennis has been classified as a 1 in 290 year weather event. Many areas in the south of the County were impacted by river flooding – and the monitoring gauge for the River Taff at Hawthorn showed that the water levels were at their highest in over forty years and a full 80cm higher than the records for the 1979 floods.

This was a truly exceptional weather event that placed a significant pressure on many communities across Rhondda Cynon Taf through widespread devastation, with almost 1,500 homes and businesses affected. I would like to record my thanks to all of the Council staff who provided support and assistance to those residents and businesses affected by flooding, both on the night and over the days, weeks and months that followed. This has, of course, been made all the more difficult by the global COVID-19 pandemic which followed shortly after.

It is my view that the response from the Council in the Rhydyfelin Central/Ilan ward on the night was prompt and effective in assisting and offering advice to the residents affected. Furthermore, my own experience and that of my residents, has been that information from the Council in the aftermath of the event was relayed in a clear and swift way, particularly concerning the financial support available to those who had suffered internal flood damage via the Community Flood Recovery Grant – Hardship Payment and also in terms of the updates of the Major Incident Recovery Board.

Councillor Maureen Webber  
Rhydyfelin Central/Ilan

## **TAFFS WELL WARD**

February's Storm Dennis reaped considerable damage to both Taff's Well and Nantgarw. All basement flats and rooms were under at least 4foot of water in Cardiff Road, Taff's Well. The local Park was under feet of water which destroyed the changing rooms, kitchen and Playgroup cloakroom, consequently emergency accommodation had to be found for the Playgroup to continue.

Nantgarw was badly hit and only 10 houses were not under water, all downstairs in these homes were destroyed. Residents were vacated from their homes via dinghies as there was no other way to access these homes.

Reports from residents were that by the time they received the warning of flooding they were already under about 4-5 feet of water with no time to remove any of their possessions to higher ground. Many of the residents were not insured and this as caused considerable stress and anxiety in trying to get their homes back to being fit to live in. Some houses are only just having work started on them and many still living in rented accommodation away from their Community.

These homes are situated on a flood plain, flooding was not caused by culverts or drainage but by the sheer amount of water from the river, residents are constantly living on their nerves and when heavy rain fall's they are terrified that they will back in the same situation as the beginning of the year.

My question is what can be put in place to help alleviate any future flooding of the flood plain as NRW have stated that to build higher river banking will only push the problem down further towards Cardiff

Residents need some reassurance that something will be put in place to help mitigate any future flooding that may take place and feel secure that they can go to bed at night without worrying of further flooding.

**Councillor Jill Bonetto**  
**Taffs Well Ward Councillor**

## **Treforest Ward (Submission & Photographs)**

Dear Chair, thank you for the invitation to write to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, I have as you are aware had the opportunity to speak to the committee and at to Cabinet at their meeting.

I would like to put on record my thanks to officers for the assistance I had on the Saturday Afternoon and subsequent early hours on the Sunday and throughout the period following the devastating flood and also for answering my queries about what actually happened in my ward.

Saturday afternoon 15<sup>th</sup> February

Having had warnings about the heavy rainfall we had been receiving and were due to receive even more I inspected my ward and paid particular attention to areas which are prone to flooding.

One of these was Cemetery Road Glyntaff which was already showing signs of flooding. I walked through the flood and went up behind the Crematorium to a culvert which is prone to block.

It had blocked and try as I did alone I failed to clear it and had to call out Streetcare for emergency assistance. Up to our waists in water we managed to clear the culvert and stop the water which was flooding Cemetery Road. I will attach photographs.

We cleared the debris from the numerous street drains which had quickly blocked with pine needles and blocked university traffic which was still driving through the flood causing waves to potentially flood the homes.

On this occasion Streetcare had saved the street from flooding but as it is a regular occurrence it will need to be addressed, I believe it already has agreed proposals for the work to be done.

I returned home to change and shower.

That evening the warnings got more severe, I had already posted Emergency Telephone numbers on Social Media so my community had the information to hand.

I had spoken to a residents of Cardiff Rd stating my concerns and that time the answer was in forty years we haven't flooded but my concerns still stood.

I went to bed hoping that this storm would pass by but as we all know it didn't. I was contacted in the early hours by residents who were devastated the river had burst its banks flooding Egypt St, Nile St, Niagra St and Cardiff Rd. I contacted my neighbouring ward elected member who I work closely with and we discussed the implications.

As I had been contacted by Egypt St Residents I went to Cardiff Rd first to make sure they were awake and prepared but it was too late the Castle Inn Bridge had blocked with debris and trees and caused the river to flood the street, which was also

subject to a problem with a culvert officers informed me at a later date. Cardiff Road was completely blocked to traffic.

I then went to Egypt St I had to walk from Broadway because of the flooding. This was absolutely devastating cars completely submerged and houses flooded completely. Emergency services were in assistance. We made sure everyone was out of the properties, some of these house were student houses and bedrooms were downstairs a very worrying fact. I contacted the Community Centre and they opened up to setup an emergency centre. Everyone who needed emergency accommodation was transported there where officers had already set up and started ringing around. Again the professionalism of officers helped us enormously.

Throughout the day and followings weeks we continued to work as a community through the emergency centre to take and distribute donations of food, clothing, cleaning products and household goods.

This was without doubt the most devastating incident of my elected member tenure but not the first time I have seen the floods because as a professional newspaper photographer I had covered them before but it was the very first time I have had to deal with them as a community leader and representative and I can assure you that it is a very heavy burden to carry and hopefully it will be the last time I have to.

I do not need an enquiry to tell me how and why my ward suffered these floods I already know.

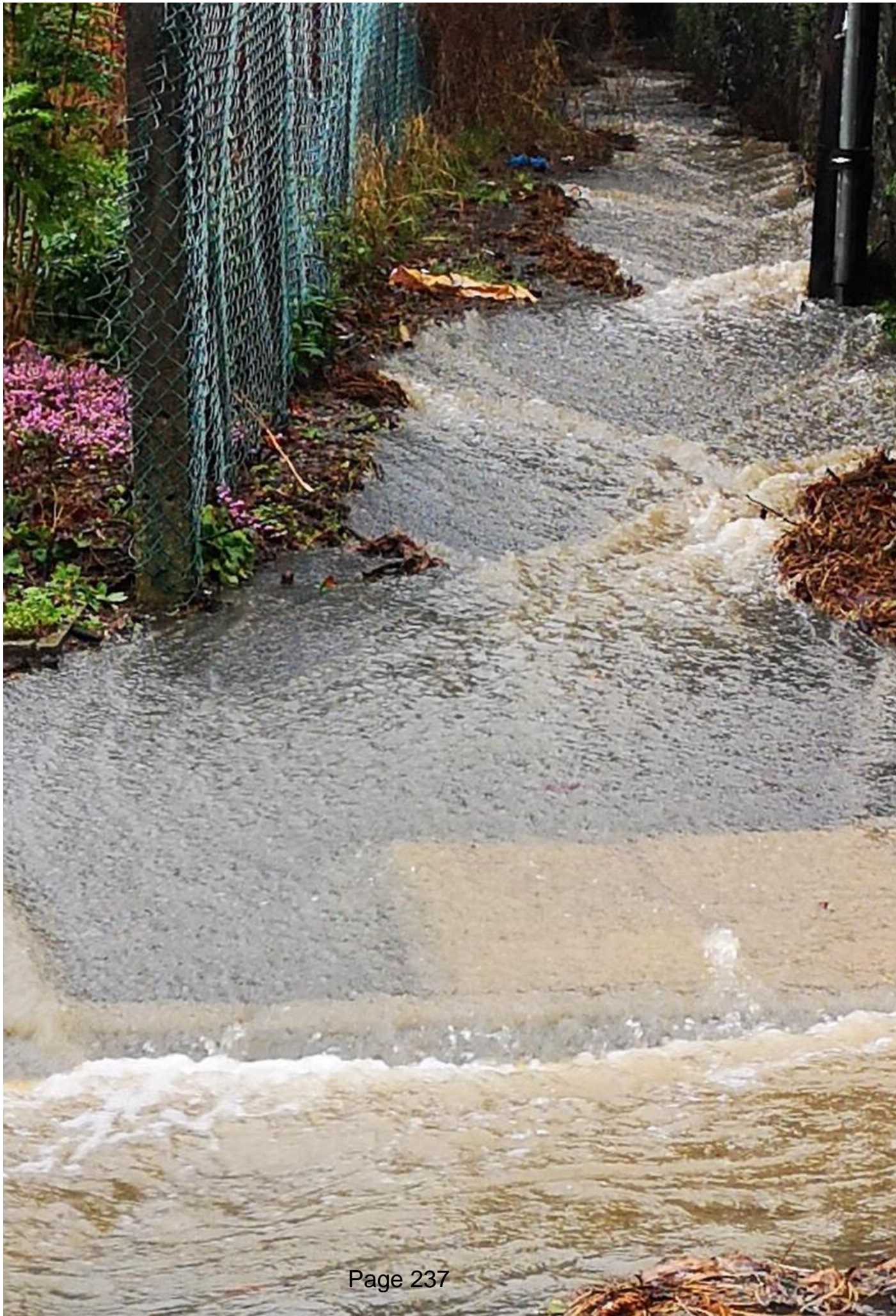
I need answers from NRW, Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC, Dwr Cymru and Welsh Government to ensure that should anything like this "190 year occurrence" ever happen again we have done our best to protect the homes, businesses and lives.

I want the section 19 reports to enable me to be able communicate with my ward and give them them the assurance we will within our powers do everything we can to stop this happening again.

Thank You

**Cllr Steve Powderhill**  
**Treforest**





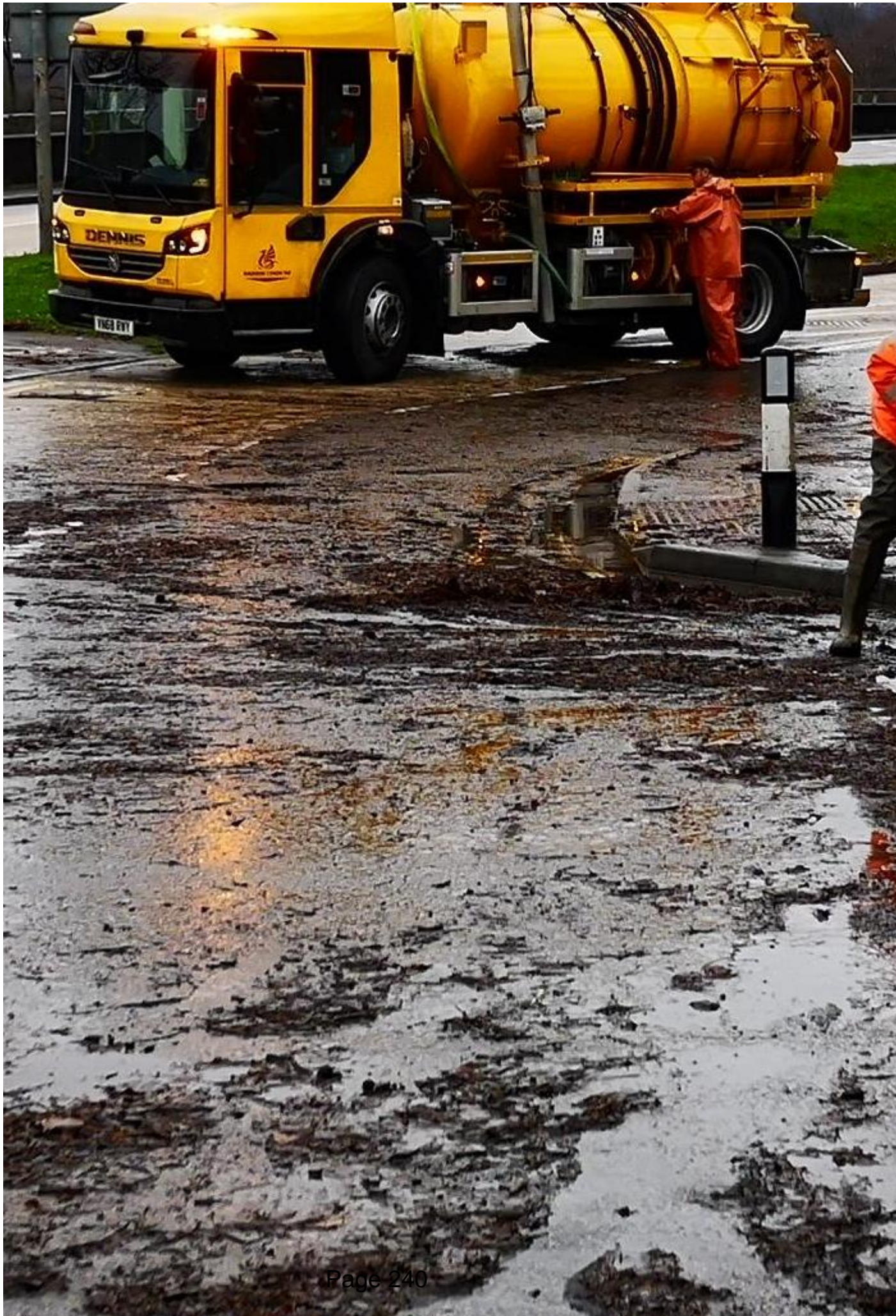




























## **YNYSHIR**

On the Sunday morning, when the call came in, I couldn't believe my eyes as I seen people's lives devastated. In over 100 years Ynyshir has never been a victim of such ruin. Ynyshir was flooded in several areas, caused by a catalogue of issues within the community.

The river in Ynyshir dammed, clogged by debris and overgrowth that remains to this day, all the way down from Maerdy. In addition, the drains were blocked and couldn't cope with the additional water either. The two contributory factors caused flooding on both sides of the bridge with one family experiencing danger to life.

On the street high above the valley floor, culverts blocked and water created watercourses through people's homes, never seen before. Other culverts failing caused water to come off the mountainside and into homes on the valley floor.

NRW who manage the river have since said that the blockage underneath the bridge is because of the height of the bridge and will be a contributory factor moving forward. I challenged the officer as residents and I believe that if the overgrowth was better managed then less debris would be present to cause any blocking!

I'm pleased to see that the culvert behind Heath Terrace is due to be fixed however, residents have already invested thousands of pounds in creating their own flood defences for the future. Other culverts still need exploring.

In such devastation though, we must acknowledge the resolve of others. Communities pulled together to distribute cleaning products and food items to those who'd been impacted. People did what they could to help others showing that the spirit in the Valleys remains.

**Councillor J Edwards Ynyshir**

## **Ynysybwl**

As you know, Clydach Terrace in Ynysybwl was severely flooded in February during Storm Dennis. The Nant Clydach River burst its banks in the early hours of February 16 2020, and overflowed over the wall opposite the houses and rushed, I am told, like a Tsunami up the street.

The water reached up to seven feet high in the houses in Clydach Terrace and residents had to be rescued from upstairs by the Fire Service, who brought them out on a raft.

One resident was knocked off his feet and ended up under the water, in what he describes as a 'washing machine' and another disabled resident, who sleeps downstairs, only just made it to the stairs with the water up to her neck. Truly frightening experiences as you will agree, I am sure.

All the residents lost everything and saw possessions and vehicles floating down the street. Some have not yet moved back into their homes. Some were not insured as they couldn't afford the high cost of living so close to a river. It has been devastating and changed lives of many residents.

NRW have done significant work on the river, removing huge amounts of shoal and debris, and I have had assurance that this stretch of the river will be monitored and worked on at regular intervals. Unfortunately it hadn't been done for several years and the river bed had risen and fallen trees and debris littered the river, which residents feel contributed to the flooding.

The authority provided numerous skips and removed many household items free of charge in the aftermath of the flood, and continue to monitor the drains along Clydach Road and Terrace, clearing when necessary and provide a sweeper for the leaves when required. The authority has also built a wall in a small area adjacent to the lowest part of the river. There is a bigger, longer part of wall which residents would like to see made higher as well.

Residents are naturally extremely anxious that this will happen again and live in fear every time it rains.

I hope I have explained as much as possible the events of that night and the devastation of residents.

**Councillor S Pickering Ynysybwl**

## **DETAILED VERBAL REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE SCRUTINY INQUIRY SESSION :-**

### **Councillor T Williams (Aberaman South)**

“The two villages Abercwmboi and Cwmaman, the whole place was flooded and patches were coming off the mountain. We had sandbag issues. Money has been spent since and we are waiting for more work to be done”

### **Councillor R Lewis (Abercynon)**

“There were 3 principal areas of Abercynon were affected by the flooding, Wood Road, the top of Nant Y Fedw were overflowing and there was some river flooding in River Row. The culvert worked because the local authority has spent money on flood prevention measures. When residents refer to 1975, there is a perception that there has been little action taken since 1975, that we have known about this for the last two decades and Storm Dennis has been a wakeup call, but should we have been more investment in the culverts and rivers. Ten years of austerity has been difficult.

We set up an Emergency Centre, helped by residents and supported by local businesses. Residents put calls to us but we were overwhelmed by the event. Myself and Councillor E George have written to Council Officers regarding the Abercynon flooding and have had a speedy response. The issue of dredging has been raised”

### **Councillor E George (Abercynon)**

“Opposite River Row there is a natural flood plain, would the banking levels of the river opposite reduce the natural flood plain?”

### **Councillor G Caple (Cymmer)**

“Pumping Stations – The Rhondda ward flooded, one did work in Trehafod, one didn’t in Britannia. Welsh Water indicated that some highways maintained drains were blocked and the culvert was over flowing. The collapse of the river wall caused flooding. There are a whole range of questions.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2020 there was constant communication with NRW and WW – At 2am the alarms went off in Trehafod and Britannia pumping stations. Are there lessons to be learned from the performance of the pumping stations?

Going forward it is vital that, with regards to the infrastructure around the pumping stations, all parties work together and explain to residents what actions are going to be taken to mitigate the risks. The river walls were smashed away, no help, no explanation, residents need to know.

Dredging – The river was dredged to quicken the flow. Three parties need to get together to inform local councillors and residents and find a strategy.”

### **Councillor K Morgan (Hirwaun)**

“This represents residents and my own feedback during and since.

We feel unsupported by RCT, frustrations with calls to the Call Centre on the night. This meeting has been a long time coming and as local member I echo the residents’ frustrations. I had to chase the Highways van for sand bags. In the Major Incident Recovery Board it mentions the impact on hundreds of properties which were flooded, the damage to a number of culverts and NRW mention the River Cynon culvert which was “deemed a risk to public safety but on private land”.

In Rhigos there was flooding on Rhigos Road, which took the impact of the water coming over the sides of the river embankment from the River Cynon.

I feel unsupported as I am having to chase all organisations.

The NRW report didn't give the events justice and the Chief Executive of NRW stated that "The challenge is bigger than any one organisation can tackle alone."

We need an Independent Inquiry to scrutinise the reports from all those responsible"

#### **Councillor P Jarman (Mountain Ash East)**

"NRW have said that the floods in February 2020 were a once in a generation event and yet the maps of the flooding issued by the Environment Agency Wales 40 years ago are the same maps. The infrastructure in Mountain Ash has had very little attention. Why the similarities in 1979 and 2020?

Planning Development in a flood plain- I thank Mr Evans for his presentation – What authority does NRW hold in objecting to proposed developments in flood plains? NRW always say it's up to the local authority whether they grant or not, can you (NRW) formally object?

So much misery could have been relieved if you had displayed the skills to give evacuation warnings. With regards to the forward plans for Treorchy, Rhondda and Treherbert, have any local members been involved?

Mountain Ash – all the sediment and debris emanating from Nant Ffrwd culvert meant that Mountain Ash was inaccessible for days. Was there ever any intention of notifying residents that consultants have been employed by the local authority regarding Caegarw flooding? Why wasn't I notified so that I could co-ordinate and encourage residents to engage?

What is the process after this? Will we be debating the issue?

I have grave concerns regarding the lack of emergency plan for those Members newly elected in 2017. The plan on the website dates from 2011 which has been reviewed, on the 7<sup>th</sup> March, the new plan had been with SLT one week before. There is no emergency plan to rely on. No-one told me there was a flooding event in Mountain Ash, so how best are we to support our communities?"

#### **Councillor A Morgan (Mountain Ash West)**

"The response – the culverts became overwhelmed in the ward and the river was running through the centre. It was on a huge scale but thankfully no-one lost their life. Officers rang me and were with me from 10pm until 2.30am. Cars were being swept down the river in Pontypridd. At 2.24am I and the Council's Emergency Planning Officer were ringing staff to make sure they were all aware of the situation. By 6am, or before, most of the SLT and Emergency Planning Officers were already on hand and dealing with the emergency.

I went around the ward to meet with residents. No officers would have time to ring or email when it happened in the early hours but SLT responded by 6.30am. The Council quickly established the Major Incident Recovery Board.

Calls did get through to make the council aware of the flooding across the county borough. Sandbags did arrive but it was only then that staff realised that they were dealing with a major incident. Details of the Resilient Road funds to repair and future-proof key transport routes across RCT are available to read in the Cabinet reports.

I organised and held a public meeting in my ward and updated residents myself. Afterwards I made the decision to leave my ward and drive the 4x4 jeep, it took over an hour to get to Abercynon and we failed to get through the B4275. We were flagged down by a Fire Engine asking for assistance, a 7.5 tonne vehicle was lost in deep water on the A4059 and the Emergency Services couldn't get through. With the best intentions, some locations just couldn't be reached.

We need to look at events but we can't respond to a natural disaster, which needs local plans, understanding and partnership working.

Welsh Government is funding everything that the council submits but it will take a sustained approach. Staff did all they could on the day."

### **Councillor S Rees-Owen (Pentre)**

"I saw the devastation. I was awoken at 3.30am and saw the videos.

The NRW report talks about better communication, Pentre was never vulnerable to flooding until the felling of the trees. Both residents and volunteers helped out.

Communications & Support – Local residents look to their local members for help and support. It's difficult to be able to support them without the information they need e.g. Facebook posts about people being awarded £500 grants and sessions for filling in forms but soon only Covid-19 related matters were reported, I had to chase up these matters and officers responses on behalf of residents.

Sandbags were lacking. The Call Centre advised that only those areas already flooded were eligible for sandbags. There was a lack of criteria.

I wasn't aware that the council had made the decision to stop the collection of household goods, I was told it had been withdrawn, although Mr Wheeler did collect the furniture.

We have had flooding since and things have improved. Mr Daniel Hitchings has gone above and beyond. When there is a forecast for bad weather I ask questions and I can communicate to residents.

Could Mr Owen Griffiths spend some time with us to go through his power point presentation he delivered in the meeting?

The NRW report – residents don't have faith in organisations investigating themselves, that is the reason for calling for an Independent Enquiry as there are many, many lessons to learn. Communication and Support need to be improved."

### **Councillor Weaver (Pentre)**

"There was a blocked culvert.

I regularly contact residents to ask how they are, they are frightened of another flood. Work is still being carried out and residents need to be put at ease, to know that their homes will be safer, flood doors are a good idea.

Communication needs to be improved, it wasn't very good. I walked the streets with sandwiches. The Salvation Army helped and other religious groups in the main.

We need to feedback to our residents. They need support and Councillors need support to ease the stress, we are out on a limb. There is no-one to support me to support others."

**Councillor H Fychan (Pontypridd Town)**

"Every resident and business deserves to have their say.

The key recommendation this committee should make is that there should be an Independent Enquiry into the floods. In 5 minutes I can't do justice to the evidence of all the businesses and residents affected in my ward, and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee doesn't have the capacity to fully investigate and compile all the evidence. And even if we were able to as a Council, are we best placed to investigate ourselves?

As referenced by Councillor Jarman, we haven't looked at why the Emergency Plan was outdated which was a failing. We have received no training since the floods nor before. Neither was the plan implemented as it should have been. There has been no scrutiny of this.

Also, I have never received an answer it why was there an IT upgrade that weekend when officers knew that a serious event was likely? We couldn't access the contact numbers and emails etc, nor information about what support the Council would provide for residents. Also, why was there no communication with all Councillors? There are lessons to be learned such as a text alert to Members which would provide them quickly with the relevant links. It could be one message to everyone. Communication was not good enough.

Mr Owen Griffiths mentioned the volunteers and coordinators. I'm still not sure the Cabinet understand how important a role the volunteers played, and that this wasn't coordinated by the Council but rather by themselves with support from us as Councillors. I contacted the Leader on the 16th February offering to coordinate support; I was asked not to do anything for 24hrs and that I would receive more information on the Wednesday, and that I was not to contact Council officers. So I was out helping flood victims, and yet had no support or information from the Council and felt like I was being treated as a nuisance, rather than part of the response. There must be someone to communicate with us. We set up a Community Centre with Councillor Powell and Councillor Eleri Griffiths, had it not been for that there would have not been no coordinated support for those affected.

I must be able to explain to residents and businesses how we are going to protect them in the future and what lessons we have learnt in order to do so. We need an Independent Inquiry."

**Councillor T Leyshon (Rhondda Ward)**

"In lower Trehafod there was up to 4ft of water in homes. The pumps have been replaced but residents are not confident. The warnings and alarm systems came after the floods, this needs to be looked at. The height of the river is a concern, it came within inches of the top of the Trehafod wall. Natural Resources Wales always used to dredge the river, I would like to see that resumed.

Residents were the saviours of the day as was the community centre who opened their doors. We had IT connected to the community centre which was great. It worked well and we got Ipads out to residents."

### **Councillor E Griffiths (Rhondda Ward)**

“On the first day of the flooding I was unable to reach Trehafod so I took the opportunity to support Pontypridd and Trallwn. I came across Council Housing Officers which were of good support and by the time I reached Trehafod they had already put things in place. Volunteers helped greatly. I was expected to answer questions about council services such as could residents stay in their homes or did they need council accommodation? I had no training to deal with it. I had a phone a number of officers.

One recommendation is to look at communication so that information is passed on. I did expect there to be a community hub within 48 hours to share information. I and fellow councillors knocked on doors to check on residents, should be part of an Emergency Plan.

There was a meeting in Pontypridd on how to clean houses, Councillor Powell said it should have been given to everyone where there was filthy water. The information came from Public health Wales. I did receive communication from Welsh Water about the pumping station.

I must praise the volunteers. I have read the Emergency plan now, it does say it would bring the volunteers together, to work with them, the local network need to reinforce how they support their communities.

There is a strong case for an Independent Inquiry, to look at the role of the three large organisations. We need an overall picture of the situation.”

### **Councillor Webber (Rhydyfelin Central & Ilan Ward)**

“With regards to Councillor Fychan’s comments about Cabinet and not being aware, please don’t assume we’re not aware.

My ward has been flooded many times in a year. Lots of families are from Newydd Housing who are responsible for some of the houses following the floods. Many homes need to have flood doors put onto their properties. The water took away a retaining wall in the ward.

Councillor Powderhill called by 3pm and by 9pm the community centre was open for families to safely bring their children. No one could expect to get through to the call centre.

The amount of culverts that are there, the ward below gets flooded which affects the cottages in Upper Boat as there’s an area in the river where its course changes but I don’t want to be an expert in this area.

We represent our communities to the best of our abilities but there are lessons to be learned. My ward is a lucky recipient of a Flood Prevention Scheme. I bought myself a megaphone with a siren to prepare for such events. I do suggest that NRW give people advance warnings as a number of individuals in my ward have been flooded.

I have to pay tribute to the staff, they worked themselves to the bone and they did their best.”

### **Councillor Bonetto (Taffs Well Ward)**

“By the time Nantgarw got the warnings it was under water, the basement flats on Cardiff Road were flooded.

The community was fantastic, they set up sites for clothes and food distribution and thanks to Griffith's construction (Taffs Well Metro Depot)

On Sunday we couldn't access Nantgarw, the only exit was on a dinghy. This has left the residents nervous and when it rains they live on their nerves. If higher defence walls are built it will only shift the flooding further down.

How can I reassure my residents? Every drop of rain that falls they start to panic. I thanks everyone who worked so hard."

#### **Councillor M Powell (Trallwn Ward)**

"I was elected as a local member to Trallwn in 1999 and I know that lots of places are built on flood plains with pluvial flooding as an additional problem.

On Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> February I was standing in Zion Street next to a senior council officer of the Council. I diverted the Housing Officer to Coedpenmaen Community Church to help. I was organising a 4x4 to help get people out. I asked for the Fire Brigade to come and rescue an elderly couple. One resident collapsed with a heart attack and died. I couldn't get the emergency services to come in and help.

This needs to be resolved.

I asked for a leaflet to be provided and laminated so residents would know how to contact the relevant services and officers. Vehicles were left outside and without warnings were left in the wrong place and couldn't be moved. The River Taff was swelling 800 cubic metres per second.

I'll be supporting the call for an Independent Inquiry. This local authority has done nothing to protect the bridge which is our heritage.

I opened the Community Centre in Trallwn with little support from the local authority, initially until the end of the week, we used it for three and a half weeks supplying food to Pentre and the Rhondda ward. I note that Ynysybwl have not been included on the list today. Our communities helped each other."

#### **Councillor S Powderhill (Treforest Ward)**

"Treforest had three different types of flooding. Officers were amazing and the culverts were cleared quickly. The blocking of the Castle Inn Bridge was caused by debris and objects and caused the flooding in Cardiff Road. Niagra Street and surrounding streets were flooded up to the first floor of the properties.

Our Officers were amazing, this was a National disaster. I knew where to go and what to do from day one. I set up the Community Centre that morning and there were many other councillors like me. These were unprecedented times.

How can we alleviate the flooding to Niagra Street, Egypt Street, Nile Street? If we build up the flood walls it will push the problem to Rhydyfelin and Hawthorn.

I look forward to the section 19 report. I thank the community, they are angry but all things in place we did an amazing job."



**Councillor E Webster (Treorchy Ward)**

“There was a major flooding in Dumfries Street that flowed down from Callum Street when the culvert failed because of debris from the water course. There may be a case for litigation as there have been reports of illegal structures being built in the water course upstream. The culvert isn’t suitable to deal with the excess debris. There are serious problems and we are asking the council to get an additional backup drainage system to give residents confidence.

There was flooding from Dumfries Street up to the main street to Stag Square, residents were still unblocking one of the culverts late into the morning.

I would like to thank Owen Griffiths for looking at measures on the mountainside to divert the watercourse to go behind the cemetery so in future less water will come down into the system and into the residential area.

Swn-Yr-Afon – The river wall eroded and a sink hole opened up and took the ground away. Natural Resources Wales are denying responsibility for the wall as is the council, meanwhile the hole is getting bigger.

High Street – This has been flooded three times in the past 7 years and after the flash flooding in June, Welsh Water assessed the pump house which functioned within limits but the RCT drainage system couldn’t cope on the highway. No-one has accepted responsibility and residents need to know what needs to be done to prevent this happening again.

There are private landowners who have land on the mountainside and often lanes aren’t adopted but the council won’t take responsibility. I have cleared drains myself but responsibility needs to be taken for these assets. Mountain water runoff is a major problem for many of our residents and we need to find ways of forcing these landowners to ensure the safety and integrity of adjacent properties.

The Members Services line is great but isn’t effective under these circumstances. Is the line fit for purpose?”

**Councillor W Jones (Treherbert)**

“We didn’t experience anything like everyone else but the response from the Council was very quick. I have issues with NRW. We live at the top of the valley. The river wall is in terrible condition and the force of the water pulled the trees and rubble away and took it down the valley. I hope NRW will take responsibility.”

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